

EXPLORING EFFORTS TO STRENGTHEN THE TEACHING PROFESSION

JOINT HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON EARLY CHILDHOOD,
ELEMENTARY, AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

AND THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION AND
WORKFORCE TRAINING

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
AND THE WORKFORCE

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EXPLORING EFFORTS TO STRENGTHEN THE TEACHING PROFESSION

Thursday, February 27, 2014

**U.S. House of Representatives,
Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Elementary,
and Secondary Education,
joint with
Subcommittee on Higher Education and
Workforce Training
Committee on Education and the Workforce,
Washington, D.C.**

The subcommittees met, pursuant to call, at 10:05 a.m., in Room 2175, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Todd Rokita [chairman of the Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Education subcommittee] presiding.

Present from Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Education subcommittee: Representatives Rokita, Kline, Foxx, Roe, Brooks, Scott, Davis, Polis, and Pocan.

Present from Higher Education and Workforce Training subcommittee: Representatives Foxx, Walberg, Salmon, Guthrie, Brooks, Hudson, Messer, Bonamici, Davis, and Wilson.

Staff present: Janelle Belland, Coalitions and Members Services Coordinator; James Bergeron, Director of Education and Human Services Policy; Lindsay Fryer, Professional Staff Member; Amy Raaf Jones, Deputy Director of Education and Human Services Policy; Nancy Locke, Chief Clerk; Daniel Murner, Press Assistant; Krisann Pearce, General Counsel; Jenny Prescott, Legislative Assistant; Dan Shorts, Legislative Assistant; Alex Sollberger, Communications Director; Alissa Strawcutter, Deputy Clerk; Brad Thomas, Senior Education Policy Advisor; Tylease Alli, Minority Clerk/Intern and Fellow Coordinator; Jeremy Ayers, Minority Education Policy Advisor; Kelly Broughan, Minority Education Policy Associate; Jody Calemine, Minority Staff Director; Jamie Fasteau, Minority Director of Education Policy; Scott Groginsky, Minority Education Policy Advisor; Julia Krahe, Minority Communications Director; Brian Levin, Minority Deputy Press Secretary/New Media Coordinator; Megan O'Reilly, Minority General Counsel; and Michael Zola, Minority Deputy Staff Director.

Chairman ROKITA. Finding a quorum present, the subcommittee will come to order. Good morning, and welcome to today's joint subcommittee hearing.

I would like to thank our witnesses for being here to help us examine ways we can work together to encourage better teachers in our nation's schools.

I would like to thank my colleague from North Carolina, Dr. Foxx, the chairwoman of the Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Training, for agreeing to hold this joint hearing on "Exploring Efforts to Strengthen the Teaching Profession."

Today we will have opening statements from the chairmen and the ranking members of each subcommittee.

And with that, I recognize myself for my opening statement.

Ladies and gentlemen, research has confirmed that teachers have an enormous influence on student learning and performance. Outside of their parents, teachers are often the single greatest influence on students' ability to build the best possible life for themselves.

Whether as a parent or in our own school days, many of us have had the fortune to witness firsthand the impact of a truly exceptional educator and what effect the educator can have on a child's life. Effective teachers can motivate students to explore the unknown, think critically, and challenge expectations. Because we fight not only for our children, but for all people so that they can build better lives for themselves and their families, we must also find ways to see that teachers achieve greater success.

Most educators earn a degree from an education program at a traditional 4-year college or university. After obtaining the degree the prospective teachers must then pass the state licensure or certification exams to become eligible to teach in that state. As the chairwoman of the Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Training will explain in her remarks, far too many teacher preparation programs, also known as "teacher colleges," are underperforming and failing to ensure new educators are ready for success in the classroom.

States play a major role in improving teacher quality and preparation, as they have authority over the licensure and certification requirements. Recognizing teacher preparation programs aren't making the grade, some states have proactively raised teacher preparation program standards and taken steps to tie teacher effectiveness to license renewal.

In Rhode Island, for example, the state board of education recently strengthened admission criteria and implemented policies to hold novice teachers accountable for improving student achievement. Additionally, the state has forged valuable partnerships with local school districts to better align pre-service training with the needs of today's students. We will learn more about the efforts underway at the state level from our witness, Dr. Deborah Gist—is that right? Okay, thank you—commissioner of the Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

We also have with us today Ms. Christina Hall from the Urban Teacher Center, an alternative certification program based in Baltimore. These programs allow individuals who already have a post-secondary degree and work experience to earn certification to teach without completing a traditional teacher education program.

Alternative certification programs have become increasingly popular in recent years, particularly with the release of studies con-

firming alternatively certified educators are just as effective as traditionally certified teachers. Additionally, the alternative routes help districts address educator shortages quickly and more efficiently, helping to ensure more students have access to good teachers, and isn't that the point?

The House Education and Workforce Committee has also been working to encourage more effective educators. Last year we successfully advanced the Student Success Act, legislation to revamp federal K-12 education law that includes a number of key provisions affecting teachers.

First, the Student Success Act eliminates the antiquated, quote—"highly qualified teacher," unquote, or HQT, provision that values an educator's degrees or credentials over his or her ability to motivate students in the classroom. States, school districts, and teachers have criticized this policy for years and it is past time we got rid of it.

Second, the legislation includes language to support state or school district efforts to develop unique teacher evaluation systems, helping ensure educators can be fairly judged on their ability to raise student achievement.

Finally, the Student Success Act also consolidates most of the teacher quality programs in current K-12 education law into a Teacher and School Leader Flexible Grant. The new grant program also absorbs some of the ideas behind the Teacher Quality Partnership Grant program under the Higher Education Act.

The Teacher and School Leader Flexible Grant supports creative approaches to recruit and retain effective teachers and grants districts the authority to partner with higher education institutions and other organizations to improve teacher and school leader prep programs. Additionally, states, alone or in partnership with state agencies of higher education, can use these funds under the grant program to reform teacher certification, recertification, and licensing; improve state teacher preparation programs; or improve alternate certification programs.

But we must not rely exclusively on our teachers, for many are asked to do far too much. That is why the Student Success Act empowers local communities and states with the authority to find their own solutions.

For example, in Indiana's 4th District Gary Henriott, of the Henriott Group, and Steve Horne, a volunteer with the United Way in Lafayette, who are both in attendance today as part of the Greater Lafayette Chamber of Commerce's annual fly-in, have led an enormously successful school reading program, called Read to Succeed, that brings business and community leaders into schools where they not only read and teach students but provide valuable mentorship for our young people.

One-size-fits-all programs will inevitably limit these sort of dynamic educational efforts that at their core are supporting children, teachers, and our communities at large.

Together the policies in the Student Success Act will encourage states to implement strategies that will help get better teachers, strengthen families, and enrich communities. Unfortunately, this critical legislation to revamp the nation's K-12 system has been

awaiting Senate consideration for several months now. It sits on Senator Reid's desk.

Once again, I urge the Senate to bring education reform legislation up for a vote as soon as possible. Our children deserve a better education law and they deserve the greatest opportunity to build better lives for themselves.

With that, I will now yield to my distinguished colleague, Higher Education and Workforce Training Subcommittee Chairman Virginia Foxx, for her opening remarks.

[The statement of Chairman Rokita follows:]

Research has confirmed teachers have an enormous influence on student learning and performance. Outside of their parents, teachers are often the single greatest influence on students' ability to build the best possible life for themselves. Whether as a parent or in our own school days, many of us have had the fortune to witness firsthand the impact a truly exceptional educator can have on a child's life. Effective teachers can motivate students to explore the unknown, think critically, and challenge expectations. Because we fight, not only for our children, but for all people, so they can build better lives for themselves and their families, we must also find ways to see teachers achieve greater success.

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Chairwoman Foxx. Thank you, Chairman Rokita.

Good morning and welcome.

I thank our panel of witnesses for joining us for today's joint subcommittee hearing on strengthening the teaching profession. We look forward to your testimony.

So often teachers are unfairly blamed for the problems in our nation's schools. I had many excellent teachers throughout my education and have known many exceptional teachers since then. In fact, my own experience highlights the difference a good teacher and educational opportunity can make in the life of a student.

While we will take an honest look at teacher preparation programs today, I want to commend the hardworking individuals on the front lines of education every day. I believe I speak for most if not all of my colleagues here today when I say there is an urgent need to address the sad state of teacher preparation programs in this country.

According to the National Council of Teacher Quality's 2013 Teacher Prep Review, teacher preparation programs at American colleges and universities, quote—"have become an industry of mediocrity, churning out first-year teachers with classroom management skills and content knowledge inadequate to thrive in classrooms with ever-increasing ethnic and socioeconomic student diversity." The scathing report details myriad problems within teacher preparation systems, including overly lenient admissions policies, outdated coursework, and a severe lack of hands-on classroom experience.

In a piece for the Wall Street Journal, education consultant Harold Kwalwasser and Napa County Superintendent, Dr. Barbara Nemko echoed the National Council of Teacher Quality's findings, stating, quote—"Too often these future educators learn to 'teach' math but they don't necessarily learn how to do the math itself," end quote.

Without strong teacher preparation programs we cannot make real progress in our efforts to improve K–12 schools, raise gradua-

tion rates, and help more children get on the path to a successful future. It is time to shine a bright light on the problems with teacher preparation as we examine ways school districts, postsecondary institutions, organizations, and states are working together to challenge the status quo.

Chairman Rokita has already discussed ways states and school districts are working to bring more effective teachers into the classroom and reviewed our efforts in the Student Success Act to support state and local efforts to recruit, hire, and retain better teachers.

On the postsecondary level, four institutions have earned national recognition for their efforts to strengthen the teaching profession. Rigorous coursework, high academic standards, and extensive hands-on experience at The Ohio State University, Lipscomb University, Furman University, and Vanderbilt University have earned these institutions' teacher preparation programs high marks from the National Council on Teacher Quality.

We are fortunate to have Dr. Marcy Singer-Gabella from Vanderbilt's Peabody College with us today to describe the institution's efforts to ensure students graduate ready to move to the front of the classroom.

As the committee continues to prepare for the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act, reducing regulatory burdens on higher education institutions remains a top priority. Like most postsecondary programs, teacher colleges are overwhelmed with reporting requirements, few of which have any real bearing on the quality of teachers produced by the programs.

While we agree on the need to strengthen data collection under the law, we must make sure the right kind of data is collected to provide helpful information. I look forward to continuing conversations with my colleagues on ways to help states and schools report useful, timely information for policymakers, states, districts, institutions, prospective teachers, and the public. We also must ensure federally mandated reporting requirements do not create additional burdens or hinder the good work already underway.

We must also continue monitoring actions by the Obama administration that would increase federal overreach and limit innovation in postsecondary education, especially with regard to the teaching profession. I remain concerned about the direction of the administration's spring 2012 negotiated rulemaking session, which did not result in consensus among participants.

Though the regulations have yet to be released, I am wary of any new federal dictates on teacher preparation programs, program quality, and teacher effectiveness. These responsibilities are best left to states and institutions, not federal bureaucrats.

Once again, I would like to thank our witnesses for joining us today. We look forward to learning your views on strengthening the teaching profession.

And with that, I yield back.

[The statement of Chairwoman Foxx follows:]

So often teachers are unfairly blamed for the problems in our nation's school. I had excellent teachers throughout my education and know many exceptional teachers. In fact, my own experience highlights the difference a good teacher and educational opportunity can make in the life of a student. While we will take an honest

look at teacher preparation programs today, I want to commend the hardworking individuals on the frontlines of education every day.

I believe I speak for most, if not all, of my colleagues here today when I say there is an urgent need to address the sad state of teacher preparation programs in this country. According to the National Council of Teacher Quality's 2013 Teacher Prep Review, teacher preparation programs at American colleges and universities "have become an industry of mediocrity, churning out first-year teachers with classroom management skills and content knowledge inadequate to thrive in classrooms with ever-increasing ethnic and socioeconomic student diversity."

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Without strong teacher preparation programs, we cannot make real progress in our efforts to improve K-12 schools, raise graduation rates, and help more children get on the path to a successful future. It is time to shine a bright light on the problems with teacher preparation as we examine ways school districts, postsecondary institutions, organizations, and states are working together to challenge the status quo.

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Chairman ROKITA. Thank you, Dr. Foxx.

I now yield to my distinguished colleague from Colorado, Mr. Jared Polis, for his opening remarks.

Mr. POLIS. I thank the chair. I am thrilled that the committee has called this important hearing.

Not only does our own personal experience highlight the importance of our own teachers that we had and that I had growing up, and common sense indicates that the most important factor is a teacher in the classroom, but the data bears out that there is no

more important school-level factor that influences a child's education than the quality of the teacher that they have.

On day one our teachers need to enter the classroom with the skills, the knowledge they need to succeed. We need to make sure we prepare teachers for success, that they are evaluated fairly, that they are compensated well, and that they have working conditions that allow them to thrive in helping their students achieve.

Unfortunately, our system for preparing teachers today is hit or miss and systemically is falling short of ensuring that we have enough quality teachers to enter particularly the classrooms that serve our most at-risk kids. According to a recent study of schools of education, almost two-thirds of recent school of education alumni reported that schools of education at 4-year colleges did not adequately prepare them to enter the classroom on day one.

Students in high-poverty schools are twice as likely to be assigned new teachers. This means our most vulnerable students often bear the brunt of a system that fails to consistently prepare high-quality teachers to enter the classroom.

But there is good news, as well. We can and we are doing better.

Across the country innovative teacher preparation programs like the Urban Teaching Center, the Relay Graduate School of Education, and the Match Teacher Residency program are breaking the traditional classroom model, partnering with school districts, prioritizing practice and coaching instead of theory, and demonstrating that the first-year teacher does not need to learn through failure.

That is why I have introduced the bipartisan GREAT Act, along with Congressman Petri, which would encourage the growth of teachers and principal academies, which are held accountable for high standards in exchange for being free from burdensome input-based regulations that are unrelated to student achievement. It is our hope that these academies open up the profession of teaching to people who otherwise might not choose to enter it, as well as ensure that graduates of the academies are ready to be excellent teachers on day one.

These programs use video to emulate best practices, allow novice teachers to learn from mentors and professors who themselves are experts, and recommend students for licensure based not on seat time but on proven results. These innovations are already leading to improved student outcomes as well as increased teacher retention and morale. Unfortunately, many of these programs are unable to offer federal financial aid because they are not able to make it through the current burdensome, costly accreditation process that focuses more on inputs than outcomes and hasn't changed in recent history.

On the state level, the Council of Chief State School Officers has partnered with seven states to adopt bold reform measures in teacher preparation and licensure. These and other states are taking a comprehensive approach to improve their human capital pipelines for teachers by raising the bar on teacher preparation and performance across all programs.

It is important for states and for the federal government to support innovation and reform in the field of teacher preparation. We need to ensure that transparency exists and remove the Higher

Education Act's onerous input-based reporting requirements, but focus on outcomes to ensure that success is rewarded.

We have a crucial role to play in ensuring that meaningful data exists, is collected, is analyzed, that teacher preparation programs are held accountable, and to promote best practices in the field.

Doing so in preparation programs requires restructuring of data systems to ensure that teacher performance can be tracked back to programs—17 states already have the ability to do that. We also need to ensure that high-quality induction and mentoring experiences are available when teachers enter the classroom.

I look forward to hearing from our esteemed witnesses about their experiences and perspectives on improving the teaching profession and investing in our future—America's children.

[The statement of Mr. Polis follows:]

I am very glad that the Committee has called this important hearing. There is no more important school-level factor influencing our children's education than the quality of our teaching force.

On day one, our teachers need to enter the classroom with the skills and knowledge they need to succeed. Unfortunately, our system for preparing teachers is falling short.

According to a leading study of schools of education, almost two-thirds of education school alumni reported that schools of education at four-year colleges did not adequately prepare them for the classroom.

Moreover, students in high-poverty and high-minority schools are twice as likely to be assigned to new teachers. This means our most vulnerable students are bearing the brunt of a system that fails to consistently prepare high-quality educators.

We can do better. Across the country, innovative teacher preparation programs, like the Urban Teacher Center, the Relay Graduate School of Education, and MATCH Teacher Residency, are breaking the traditional classroom model, partnering with K–12 school districts, prioritizing practice and coaching instead of theory, and demonstrating that the first year teacher does not need to learn through failure.

These programs use video to emulate best practices, allow novice teachers to learn from professors who are themselves expert educators, and recommend students for licensure based on mastery, not “seat time.” These innovations have led to improved student outcomes and increased teacher retention.

Unfortunately, many of these programs are unable to offer federal financial aid because they are not able to make it through a burdensome, costly accreditation process that focuses more on inputs than outcomes like teacher performance, job placement, and retention.

On the state level, the Council of Chief State School Officers has partnered with seven states to adopt bold reform measures in teacher preparation and licensure. These and other states are taking a comprehensive approach to improve their human capital pipelines by raising the bar on teacher preparation program performance.

It is important for states and for the federal government to support innovation and reform in the field of teacher preparation. We need to remove the Higher Education Act's onerous input-based reporting requirements, and focus on outcomes.

We have a crucial role to play in collecting meaningful data on program results, holding teacher preparation programs accountable, and promoting best practices in the field.

Doing so requires increasing the selectivity of who enrolls in preparation programs, restructuring data systems to ensure that teacher performance can track back to programs, which 17 states currently have the ability to do, and ensuring that teachers have high-quality induction and mentoring experiences when they enter the classroom.

I look forward to hearing from our esteemed witnesses about their experiences and perspectives on improving the teaching profession and investing in America's future – our children.

Mr. POLIS. I would also like to ask unanimous consent to submit Chairman Hinojosa's statement to the record?

[The statement of Mr. Hinojosa follows:]

Thank you, Representative Polis.

Today's hearing will focus on efforts to strengthen the teaching profession. As Ranking Member of the Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Training, I believe that all students should have access to outstanding teachers. Research clearly shows that the most important factor in the education of a child is teacher quality, followed by school leadership.

Along the same lines, it is also critical to recruit and train exemplary teachers who reflect the rich cultural and linguistic diversity of the student population and local community that they serve.

Improving the quality of the teaching profession is key to student success, but we know that it begins with teacher preparation programs, before teachers actually enter the classroom.

In my view, the federal government, states, and institutions can do more to improve the quality of teacher preparation programs and ensure that they are adequately funded.

To begin, federal policy on teacher preparation is limited and not well-funded. Title II of the Higher Education Act (HEA) provides a mere \$40 million per year and requires states to report on basic aspects of their teacher preparation programs, but places few requirements on them. Federal policy can help states reform and improve their teacher preparation programs. HEA requirements can shift the focus on outcomes and help teacher preparation programs improve.

For example, H.R. 2172, the "Educator Preparation Reform Act," a bill sponsored by my colleague, Representative Mike Honda, would help to improve the quality of teaching in high need schools by reforming and strengthening accountability of educator preparation programs as well as support partnerships to meet the needs of educators and educational leaders.

As a proud cosponsor of the bill, I would like to see improvements to the Teacher Quality

Partnership Grants Program in Title II of the Higher Education Act.

Finally, I want to underscore what is quite obvious in to us in my home state of Texas: American public schools have and will continue to become increasingly diverse. Students of color in Texas already comprise the majority of the state's public school enrollments. As a result, teacher diversity must be a central part of this discussion.

In 2013, the Equity and Excellence Commission's report, entitled "For Each and Every Child" provided a number of recommendations to Secretary of Education Arne Duncan to address the teacher quality pipeline.

With regard to teacher diversity, I am pleased that the commission highlighted the importance of this issue.

In particular, the Commission called on teacher training and professional development programs to be tailored to meet the needs of today's contemporary classrooms, where students of color, low-income students and students learning English as a second language are increasingly the majority.

The commission also recommended that states recruit and retain excellent multilingual teachers and teachers of color.

In closing, I look forward to hearing from our distinguished panelists on how our nation can strengthen the teaching profession and improve student success for all.

Thank you!

Chairman ROKITA. Without objection. And thank you, Mr. Polis.

I now would like to say for the record, pursuant to committee rule 7(c) all subcommittee members will be permitted to submit written statements to be included in the permanent hearing record. And without objection, the hearing record will remain open for 14 days to allow statements, questions for the record, and other extraneous material referenced during the hearing to be submitted into the official record.

It is now my pleasure to introduce our distinguished panel of witnesses.

Again, we have joining us this morning Dr. Deborah Gist. She is the commissioner of the Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Before coming to Rhode Island she served as the first state superintendent of education for the District of Columbia. She also serves as a founding member of Chiefs for Change.

We also have with us this morning Dr. Marcy Singer-Gabella. She is a professor and associate chair for teacher education in the Department of Teaching and Learning at Vanderbilt University. Before coming to Vanderbilt she taught high school social studies in New York and worked with the Stanford School's Collaborative Professional Development Center in the California Bay Area.

Welcome.

Dr. Heather Peske is the associate commissioner for educator quality at the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Prior to that role she was vice president of programs at Teach Plus. She has also served as the director of teacher quality at the Education Trust and as an elementary school teacher and Teach for America Corps member in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

Welcome.

Ms. Christina Hall is the cofounder and co-director of the Urban Teacher Center in Baltimore, Maryland. Prior to co-launching Urban Teacher Center, Ms. Hall was chief of staff for the chief academic officer in Baltimore City Public Schools. She has also served as an attorney advocating for disadvantaged youth at the Department of Social Services for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and as a public high school teacher.

Welcome to you, Ms. Hall.

Before I recognize each of you to provide your testimony let me briefly explain our lighting system.

You will each have 5 minutes to present your testimony. When you begin the light in front of you will turn green; when 1 minute is left the light will turn yellow; when your time has expired the light will turn red. At that point I ask you to wrap up your remarks as best as you are able.

After everyone has testified, members will each have 5 minutes to ask questions of the panel—fairly self-explanatory. It is mostly a reminder for us up here about the lighting system.

I would now like to recognize Dr. Gist for 5 minutes.

Dr. Gist?

**STATEMENT OF DR. DEBORAH A. GIST, COMMISSIONER,
RHODE ISLAND DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY AND SEC-
ONDARY EDUCATION, PROVIDENCE, RI**

Ms. GIST. Good morning, Chairman Rokita, and good morning, Chairwoman Foxx and Representative Polis and all of the members of the committee. It is really an honor to be here this morning to talk with you about a topic that is truly important to all of us as Americans, the issue of educator quality and teacher preparation.

My name is Deborah Gist. I am the Commissioner of Education in Rhode Island.

I also serve on the board of directors of the Council for the Accreditation of Teacher—Educator Preparation, which is known as CAEP. I am also a member of the technical panel for the Teacher Prep Review for the National Council of Teacher Quality, and as a member of the board of directors of the Council of Chief State School Officers, which has provided tremendous support to those of

us in our states as we do all of our work, but including our work with teacher preparation.

Because of my work in all of these different roles I have an appreciation for how necessary it is that we make dramatic improvements to our current system of teacher preparation. To teach successfully our graduates need—they need to know their subject, they need to know how to reach a diverse population of students, and they need to know how to apply their learning and their skill in the classroom.

So recognizing this need, in Rhode Island we worked closely over the past year, with our partners in higher education in our state, to significantly revise our approval standards for our educator preparation programs, and our board adopted these standards in November. I have attached them and you should have a copy of those standards.

These new standards that we put in place in our state were modeled after the standards developed by CAEP, the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation. And there was a large commission that worked on that; I am sure you are familiar with that work. So we modeled our standards after CAEP.

So I want to tell you a little bit about those standards. I will just talk about four different—or five different parts of those standards.

The first is that we are focused on the importance of classroom practice, with more emphasis on partnerships between our preparation programs and the schools—the K–12 schools within our state. We want to make sure that our aspiring teachers have experiences in our classrooms with students. We want our teacher preparation programs to coordinate with our schools and make sure that those field placements are high quality and make sure that aspiring teachers are performing and getting strong feedback when they are in those programs.

Second, we want our teaching force to reflect the diversity of students in Rhode Island. Therefore, we expect our teacher preparation programs to recruit, to make sure that they have diverse candidates that they are bringing into their programs and supporting all candidates as they strive to become teachers.

Third, we expect our teacher preparation programs to have criteria and assessments to determine whether or not their candidates are truly ready to be candidates for certification. That all starts with how they attract and recruit and the selection criteria they use when aspiring teachers are coming into their programs. And then they also need to evaluate their performance once they are actually in their practicums.

And fourth, we expect our programs to continue to gather information about the performance of their graduates through at least the first year of their teaching by gathering feedback from the graduates and from their employers.

And finally, we are going to be sharing data about and report information widely, and we are going to do it publicly through a series of report cards on each preparation program.

I strongly encourage the committee to take note of the work that state leaders have done, that educators in the field have done, and national organizations such as CAEP have done. There is a lot of movement happening in this area, and we are really engaged in

making changes—dramatic changes in the system, including through educator preparation program accreditation, which is what CAEP is responsible for.

So I am sure you are aware that all of our states currently provide a report to the U.S. Department of Education on our educator preparation programs, and going forward it would be helpful if this data collection were limited to data points that provide evidence of quality, and that our states and our educator preparation programs find the data that they are gathering and reporting to be actually valuable, such as data that is more focused on outcomes.

It would also be valuable if we could gather and analyze and report this data not just aggregated across the preparation institutions, but designated by the programs that they have, so early childhood, elementary, secondary, for example.

I think it is important that states retain the authority to set their own benchmarks for measuring the efficacy of their preparation programs, but the data and reports on the programs will be most useful if we are all publicly reporting those data and that we are sharing with those we are responsible to what the benchmarks are that we are setting.

We may never know how important the work that we are doing is because it is just really launching the careers of our aspiring educators, but we know that we have to do things differently, and I assure you that things are happening very differently in our programs across the country. So I am happy to answer any questions and share in a dialogue with the committee and with my colleagues on the panel.

[The statement of Dr. Gist follows:]



Deborah A. Gist
Commissioner

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**House Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Education and
the House Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Training**

Hearing on “Exploring Efforts to Strengthen the Teaching Profession”

February 27, 2014 – 10 a.m.

Written Testimony

Deborah A. Gist, Rhode Island Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education

Chairman Rokita, Chairwoman Foxx, Representatives McCarthy and Hinojosa, Members of the Committee, I am honored to be invited to speak before you this morning on an issue of great importance to all Americans: strengthening the teaching profession.

My name is Deborah A. Gist, and I am the Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education for the State of Rhode Island.

I also serve as a member of the Board of Directors of the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation, a member of the Technical Panel for Teacher Prep Review for the National Council on Teacher Quality, as one of the founding members and the vice-chair of Chiefs for Change, and as a former board member of the Urban Teacher Center. I am also a member of the Board of Directors of the Council of Chief State School Officers, which has provided tremendous support for policy development regarding teacher quality and many other issues we face at the state and local level.

Because of my work in these different roles, I have an appreciation for how necessary it is that we make dramatic improvements to our current systems of teacher preparation. I have also seen what quality looks like and what we must aim to create for every aspiring teacher.

In Rhode Island, we have set forth our mission, our goals, and our priorities in our 5-year strategic plan, *Transforming Education in Rhode Island*.

Because the single most important school-based factor in student success is the quality of the classroom teacher, the first priority in our strategic plan is ensuring that we have an effective teacher in every classroom.

Ensuring that we have effective teachers in every classroom and effective leaders in every school encompasses the entire span of an educator’s career. Our responsibility begins with recruiting great teachers into the profession, and the process includes supporting excellent programs of educator preparation, providing support and guidance for new teachers as they enter the profession, providing continuous feedback and support for teachers throughout their

careers, and opening opportunities for teachers to enter positions of school leadership, if that is their desire.

In Rhode Island, we have launched a number of initiatives to improve teacher effectiveness. For example, we have begun a statewide induction program for first-year teachers. Under this program, each new teacher is linked with an "induction coach," an experienced educator who is relieved of teaching duties and is working full time to help new teachers transition successfully to this challenging profession.

We have also initiated annual evaluations for all educators, based on observations of successful classroom practices, fulfillment of professional responsibilities, and evidence of student growth and achievement.

In addition, we have linked certification renewal to educator effectiveness. Under regulations that our state Board approved in 2011, educators who have been demonstrated satisfactory performance over a period of time will have their certifications renewed. Our certification system is no longer based on inputs, such as hours of professional development, but rather on outcomes: evidence of effective teaching.

These initiatives aside, there is no doubt that the process of bringing great teachers into our classrooms begins with ensuring that we have high-quality programs for teacher preparation. I appreciate that you have included me in this important conversation today to speak about educator preparation.

By way of background, I was privileged to receive my teacher preparation through an excellent program at the University of Oklahoma.

I studied early-childhood education. From the time I entered the program at "OU," I worked in a lab school on campus, the Institute for Child Development, under the direction of accomplished academics and teachers, including Dr. Joanne Hendrick. I wrote lesson plans, worked directly with children, and received regular observations and feedback on my work. Being in the lab school, planning for learning, and engaging with children began early in the program and included critical support from master teachers.

To teach successfully, graduates of our preparation programs need to know their subject, know how to reach a diverse population of students, and know how to apply their learning and their skills in a classroom setting.

In October 2009, with our strategic plan in place, our initial step toward improving teacher quality in Rhode Island was to set high minimum scores for entry into preparation programs. Students hoping to enter a teacher-preparation program have to attain or surpass the cut score in one of several approved assessments, such as the ACT, the GRE, the SAT, or the Praxis assessments in mathematics, reading and writing. Our goal is to have a teaching corps made up of the best teachers in the country, so we opted to raise the program-entry cut score in stages over the next two year because we need our aspiring teachers to be among the best of today's college students.

This action to increase selectivity was only a first step, however, toward raising the quality of teacher-preparation candidates and setting us on a path to better-prepared graduates. To do so, we knew we had to revise our educator-preparation program standards, which had been largely unchanged for 12 years.

These educator-preparation program standards set forth the elements that we expect to see in a high-quality program. In Rhode Island, the Board of Education has the authority in state law to "adopt standards and qualifications of teachers." To carry out this process, the Rhode Island Department of Education is responsible for review and approval of all educator-preparation programs in the state, in both public and nonpublic institutions of higher education. Approval from our agency is highly important to all Rhode Island preparation programs because graduates of approved programs are automatically eligible for certification in Rhode Island, provided they have achieved passing scores on the appropriate licensure tests.

All programs are up for review every five years, and more frequently if necessary. Our program reviews include site visits by a team of department staff and other educators, as well as a comprehensive review of data and information that the programs provide to us. During the process of program review, we use the program-approval standards as a blueprint to focus and direct our work.

The review process encourages programs to maintain excellence and to strive toward continuous improvement, and the process also enables us to rescind approval from programs that we find to be ineffective. We have done so twice over the past decade, for a principal-preparation program at one of our public institutions of higher education and for a reading-specialist program at a nonpublic college.

Recognizing the need to bring our program-approval standards up to date and into alignment with the goals and priorities in our strategic plan, we worked closely over the past year with our partners in higher education to significantly revise our approval standards for educator-preparation programs. The Rhode Island Board of Education approved these new standards in November, and I have attached these standards to my written testimony.

Our new standards, modeled after the standards from the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP), include five key elements that I would like to bring to your attention. We believe these elements to be essential to the improvement of program quality.

First, we are focused on the importance of classroom practice, with more emphasis on partnerships between preparation programs and schools and on the experiences aspiring teachers have during their field placements.

We expect our teacher-preparation programs to coordinate field placements closely with schools and to develop measures to determine how effectively their aspiring teachers are performing during their placements. In fact, in Rhode Island we require that programs must ensure that their aspiring teachers are placed only in classrooms with teachers who have received evaluations of "effective" or better.

Second, we want our teaching force to reflect the diversity of students in Rhode Island public schools.

Therefore, we expect our teacher-preparation programs to demonstrate their commitment to recruiting diverse candidates for admission and to supporting all candidates as they strive to become beginning teachers.

Third, we expect our teacher-preparation programs to have criteria and assessments for determining whether their students are truly ready to be candidates for certification.

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This expectation begins with ensuring that all programs attract and retain high-quality candidates through recruitment and admissions. The programs must also evaluate the classroom performance of their aspiring teachers – while on campus as students and while in the field as student-teachers.

We also emphasize, however, that our programs must consider and evaluate additional evidence of readiness for certification, such as leadership, resilience, and perseverance – all of which are critical traits for effective educators. Our educator-preparation programs are in the process of development measurement protocols for this additional evidence of readiness, and the measurements may include such elements as interviews and observations of classroom practice.

Fourth, we expect our programs to continue to gather information about the performance of their graduates through at least their first year of teaching.

We expect our programs to use feedback from their graduates and data from employers – data such as the number and percentage of graduates to find teaching jobs and the evaluation results of recent graduates – to determine how well their graduates are improving student learning and achievement.

We expect all programs to use this information to continuously improve the quality of instruction, the efficacy of field placements, and the outcomes for their graduates.

Finally, we expect our preparation programs to analyze data, share the data, and report information widely and publicly. We have developed a template for our new Educator Preparation Program Report Cards, which will include data on the grade-point averages of entering candidates, median composite scores of candidates on various normed admissions tests, passage rates on licensure exams, the percentages of program completers receiving certification and employment within various time frames, and the educator-evaluation results of recent completers, including performance-level data on observations of practice, fulfillment of professional responsibilities, and effect on student growth and achievement.

Programs themselves will benefit from this reporting process, aspiring teachers will make good use of this information as they consider program selection, school districts will use the information when hiring, my agency – the Rhode Island Department of Education – will use these reports as we continue to monitor program quality, and Rhode Islanders in general will review these reports to see how well their tax and tuition dollars are invested.

In summary, I urge the Committee to take note of the work of state leaders, national organizations such as the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP), and educators in the field who are engaged in improving teacher preparation. Thanks to the ongoing work in many states, we now have more of a focus on how effectively our programs coordinate their practices with school districts to improve student outcomes. We require more robust data and more frequent feedback loops on teacher-candidate performance throughout their participation in the preparation program.

In Rhode Island, our preparation programs recognize that we need better alignment to our state learning standards and more careful recruitment of diverse and high-quality candidates. Our partners in higher education know we are focused on results and that we demand accountability for preparing highly effective teachers.

You are most likely aware that all states currently provide the U.S. Department of Education with annual reports on educator-preparation programs. These reports contain approximately 400 data points, and it is not evident that these data points all pertain to the quality of the educator-preparation programs.

Going forward, it would be helpful if this data collection were limited to data points that provide evidence of quality and that states and educator-preparation programs find to be truly valuable, such as data on outcomes. It would also be more valuable if states could analyze and report this data not aggregated across the entire preparation program but disaggregated by program type, such as elementary, secondary, and early childhood.

States should certainly retain the authority to set their own benchmarks for measuring the efficacy of preparation programs, but the data and reports on programs will be most useful if states publicly report their benchmarks and measurement criteria for program evaluation.

During our teacher-preparation program quality work in Rhode Island, we have focused on student learning and program improvement. Through it all, we have strived to keep in mind what matters most—our students and their learning.

I remember 26 years ago, when I had just begun a student-teaching experience at a local elementary school, I met a kindergarten girl who was very fascinated with why I was in her classroom. I explained to her a number of times that her teacher was helping me to learn how to be a teacher someday. Finally, she said, "Oh, so teachers teach teachers how to be a teacher!" I said, "Right!" Thoughtfully, she paused for a moment and then said: "I wonder how the first teacher learned!"

We may never know the answer to that question, but we can do much more than we are doing today to ensure that our teachers are better prepared and ready from the first day of school to serve our children well.

Your inviting me and my colleagues here today demonstrates that you want to hear from those of us in the field about the work states are doing to strengthen the teaching profession. Much of this work, quite rightly, takes place at the state and local level, and it is important to let this work go forward, within the frameworks that such national organizations as the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation have developed to support continuous improvement in our educator-preparation programs.

I for one believe that decisions about education should take place as close to the student level as is practical and effective. Just as teachers do their work best when school leaders give them autonomy, resources, and support, we at the state level do our work best when given autonomy, guidance, and positive incentives from the federal level. The federal role should continue to be providing states and communities with clear delineations of what we must accomplish in our schools, but not with prescriptions for how to do so. I hope that this kind of guidance and support results from today's hearing and from other hearings before your Committee.

As a lifelong educator, I believe that teaching is the most important and the most rewarding profession in the world. I hope the initiatives I have described for you this morning will help as you continue your work.

I would be glad to answer any questions you may have.

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Chairman ROKITA. Thank you very much.
I would now like to recognize Dr. Singer-Gabella for 5 minutes.
Doctor?

**STATEMENT OF DR. MARCY SINGER-GABELLA, PROFESSOR OF
THE PRACTICE OF EDUCATION, VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY,
NASHVILLE, TN**

Ms. SINGER-GABELLA. Chairman Rokita, Chairwoman Foxx, Congressman Polis, Congressman Hinojosa, members of the subcommittees, thank you for inviting me to talk with you today about Vanderbilt's teacher education programs. I serve as associate chair for teacher education and work closely with faculty across two departments responsible for preparing early childhood, elementary, secondary, and special education teachers.

In my comments I want to first set the context for our work and then offer some examples of how we are preparing teachers to succeed and persist in the profession.

My colleagues and I view teacher preparation as a larger system of schooling intended to prepare youth to flourish in work and civic life. In the U.S. this larger system currently faces profound challenges. Let me point to three that shape and motivate our work as teacher educators.

First, a bimodal distribution of school performance, with schools at one end that are doing quite well, and a significant number of schools, typically at the lower end of the socioeconomic spectrum, that are not doing well at all.

Second, a teacher workforce for which the modal number of years of experience has shifted from 15 to 1 in just over two decades. That means that teachers have taught for—that more teachers have taught for only 1 year than have taught 5, 10, or 15. Key causes of this shift include the absence of a real career path, low levels of respect and compensation, and the sapping of motivation caused by an imbalance of interest in test scores.

And third, system churn, caused by the very real difficulty of teaching in struggling schools, and increasing reliance on temporary teachers—young, bright, very talented individuals who are entering teaching for the short term as a stepping stone to another career.

At Vanderbilt our goal is to prepare teachers who have the knowledge, skills, and stamina to succeed and to stay in the profession. We believe that our chances of success are intertwined with the fortunes of the schools we serve.

To address the challenges I have noted, schools must become sites of ongoing learning, growth, and opportunity not only for students but also for the adults who teach in them. Central to our strategy, therefore, is the design of partnerships with schools that attend to the interests and challenges of school and university simultaneously.

So, for example, with our partner schools we are redesigning roles that enable teacher candidates to learn the craft of teaching by working on teams with experienced and novice teachers over the course of a year. Candidates act as mentors and tutors for pre-K–12 students and as increasingly able assistants for master teachers.

In turn, master teachers develop and refine new skills as they support the development of novices and peers.

By matching up our candidates' needs for real-world experience and models of practice with schools' needs for more skilled and caring adults to work with learners we improve and expand the resources available to schools in which resources are scarce. Again, we are positioning teacher education in relation to a bigger project of building schools' capacity to serve all learners well.

We are finding that really making a difference for students requires moving beyond egg-crate models of schooling that isolate teachers from one another, and recruiting and retaining a more talented and diverse workforce. In my written testimony I have suggested what this can look like in terms of reconfigured schedules and teaching assignments, differentiated staffing patterns, and new compensation arrangements.

In re-centering the learning of teaching and practice we are not abandoning theory and research. Rather, throughout our programs we help candidates draw connections between their experiences in the field and cutting-edge research on learning and teaching. These connections help candidates develop principled understanding illustrated by real-world examples that can guide their future practice. Through these activities candidates also learn to participate in the kinds of data-informed collegial conversations that can drive learning throughout their careers.

So how do we know we are preparing candidates who will make a positive difference? Here are four measures we are using.

Before they graduate, candidates in my department must pass the edTPA, a nationally, externally scored, performance-based measure of candidates' abilities to plan, enact, and assess teaching and learning of rigorous content. We want to be sure that our candidates are proficient before they become teachers of record.

Once candidates take positions teaching, we collect survey data on employer and graduate satisfaction 1, 3, and 5 years out from graduation. These data indicate that our graduates feel well prepared, and their employers agree.

We are now experimenting with surveys of student perceptions of the classrooms in which our graduates teach. Recent studies show interesting correlations between the degree to which learners feel challenged and supported and their achievement.

And finally, we are working with graduates to gather administrators' ratings of their teaching on state-approved observation protocols.

This collection of measures, combined with benchmark assessments throughout our programs, provide faculty with invaluable data to check impact and support program improvement.

Let me close by calling out two areas in which federal policymakers can help support advancement in the field. First, we need policy leaders to incentivize partnerships between schools and preparation programs and to continue to invest in design-based research to help build and study new arrangements.

Second, policymakers can streamline and refocus reporting requirements so they are targeted and productive, efficient and fair. Data collected should be usable and useful, and reporting guide-

lines should apply in equal measure to all organizations that prepare teachers.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify before you today. I look forward to answering your questions.

[The statement of Dr. Singer-Gabella follows:]

WRITTEN TESTIMONY OF
 Marcy Singer-Gabella
 Professor of the Practice of Education &
 Associate Chair for Teacher Education
 Peabody College of Education and Human Development
 Vanderbilt University

Before the House Subcommittees:
 Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Education
 Higher Education and Workforce Training

Chairman Rokita, Chairwoman Foxx, Congresswoman McCarthy, Congressman Hinojosa, and Members of the Subcommittees, thank you for inviting me to talk with you about Vanderbilt University's teacher education programs. I serve as Associate Chair for Teacher Education in the Department of Teaching and Learning at Vanderbilt's Peabody College, and work closely with the faculty across two departments charged with preparing early childhood, elementary, secondary and special education teachers. (Please note that my testimony reflects my own views, and not necessarily those of Vanderbilt University.)

Let me start by setting the context for our work, and describing how this context has shaped our approach to teacher preparation. I will then give some specific examples of what we are doing at Vanderbilt to prepare teachers who are not only effective but also "stayers." Finally, I will point to ways that federal policy leaders might support the ongoing development of successful models of teacher preparation to ensure that every child is taught by an effective teacher.

Setting the Context

In my comments today, I want to push beyond the easy dichotomies between traditional and alternative pathways, and beyond a view of teacher preparation as a set of more or less useful courses required for licensure. Instead, I invite you to think about teacher preparation – and about challenges of *recruiting* teachers, providing training that is *relevant* to today's classrooms, and having a positive *impact* on learning – as part of a larger system of schooling intended to prepare our youth to flourish in higher education, in the world of work, and in civic life.

In our country, this larger system currently faces profound challenges. Let me point to three that particularly shape and motivate my work as a teacher educator:

- First, a bimodal distribution of school performance, with schools at one end that are doing quite well with respect to achievement, and a significant number of

schools, typically at the lower end of the socio-economic spectrum, that are not doing well at all on this measure.

- Second, a teacher workforce for which the modal number of years of experience has shifted from fifteen to one in just over two decades. That means that of all teachers currently teaching, more have taught for only one year than have taught for two or five or ten. While retirements account for part of this shift, three other factors press against the retention of intelligent and committed individuals in the teaching profession:
 - the absence of a real career path that would allow one to grow and advance while remaining engaged in the work of teaching,
 - low levels of respect and compensation,
 - an imbalance of interest in test scores that saps motivation.
- And third, system “churn” caused by:
 - the very real challenges of teaching in struggling schools, and
 - increasing reliance on “temporary teachers” – young, bright and very talented individuals who are entering teaching for the short term, as a proving ground rather than as a profession.

At Vanderbilt, our goal is to prepare teachers who have the knowledge, skills, vision and stamina to effectively challenge and support their students’ learning, and to stay in the profession. As a leading research university, we are fortunate to have a highly talented applicant pool – our students are admitted to the program based on strong academic achievement, evidence of commitment to and successful experience working with children and youth, and demonstrated desire to learn and grow in teaching. How can we increase the odds that they will succeed and persist in the profession?

Partnering with Schools to (re)Center Preparation in Practice

We believe that our chances of success are intertwined with the fortunes of the schools – and in fact the broader system – we serve. To address the challenges above, schools must become sites of ongoing learning and growth not only for students *but also for the adults who teach them*.

Central to our strategy, therefore, is the development of partnerships with schools that attend to the interests and challenges of school and university simultaneously. To the extent that we can align our interests, frame problems as issues of shared concern, and then figure out ways to work on many challenges at once, we believe that these partnerships will be robust and productive.

So for example, with our partner principals, we are designing intensive and extended field experiences that enable teacher candidates to learn through practice – to work side by side with experienced mentors and other novices as they learn:

- to establish positive relationships with children and/or adolescents;
- to create safe yet challenging learning environments; and
- to continuously assess student progress, and
- to design responsive learning activities that build on students' knowledge and experience and help them access and master challenging subject matter.

In our current pilot models, these field experiences extend over the course of a year, positioning candidates as reliable members of the school community – not simply drop-ins. As candidates learn, they act as mentors and tutors for preK-12 students, and as increasingly able assistants for master teachers. In turn, master teachers develop and refine new skills as they support the development of novices. Yet another resource for candidates and the school is the routine coaching provided by clinical faculty members who possess deep expertise in both subject matter and pedagogy.

Increasing the ratios of adults to children allows for more personalized attention and differentiated instruction so that all students – including English learners and students with identified special needs – have access to rigorous curricula. Importantly, our candidates and clinical faculty offer not just extra pairs of hands (although that's critical), but also bring deep understanding of subject matter and new ideas and tools that open up possibilities for school innovation.

Thus, by matching our candidate's needs for real-world experience and models of practice with schools' needs for many skilled and caring adults to work with learners, we can improve and expand the resources available to schools – especially in schools in which resources are scarce. Again, we are positioning the task of teacher education in relation to a bigger project of building school capacity to serve all learners well.

Really making a difference for students requires more, however. To do so, we must move beyond rigid, egg crate models of schooling in which individual teachers work in isolation in their classrooms. And to recruit and retain capable teachers, we need to find ways to make quality preparation and professional learning affordable. This means:

- Reconfiguring schedules and teacher assignments so that teachers can work and learn as teams – teams led by master teachers, grounded by established teachers, and assisted by novices; teams that given differentiated expertise and more hands on deck, can nimbly respond to data on student progress by flexibly regrouping to match students to “just right” challenges and supports.
- Developing new staffing compensation arrangements such that both mentors *and* prospective teachers are paid for their efforts. Compensating novices, rather than asking them to put income on hold while paying tuition, can help us recruit and retain a more diverse and talented teaching workforce.

Given these kinds of arrangements, we can both serve learners well, and create rich opportunities for novices and more advanced teachers to learn in and through their work with students and colleagues.

The Role of Research and Theory

As we ratchet up candidates' engagement in practice, and work with schools to reorganize for student and teacher learning, we are not backing off attention to theory and research: these provide the foundation that enables teachers to make sense of their students' learning and to plan sound next steps. Note that the ability of universities to build and support that foundation is part of what makes universities so important in this enterprise.

Therefore, in our programs we couple immersion and graduated responsibility (rather than a fire hose of demands all at once) with opportunities to step back and reflect on what is happening with students and why.

For example, in "video club" our candidates videotape their work with learners, and then present their video and receive critical feedback from both instructors and peers. In these discussions, faculty and candidates draw connections between what candidates experience in the field and cutting edge research on learning and teaching. These connections help candidates develop principled understandings, illustrated by real world examples, to guide their future practice. In these discussions, candidates learn not only to "see" what is going on in their classrooms and why, but also to participate in the kinds of data-informed, collegial conversations that can drive learning throughout one's career.

Assessment on Dimensions that Matter

To this point I have located teacher preparation within a broader system of public education, and described our work to make teacher preparation relevant within that system. We have designed and are continuing to build opportunities for teacher learning that are embedded in school-based team structures, deepened through individual content-focused mentoring, justified and strengthened in coursework and seminars, and tested in a cycle of practice and reflection.

So how do we know we have succeeded in preparing candidates to serve learners well? Today there is a press to assess the effectiveness of teacher preparation programs based on the value-added scores of their graduates. We agree that programs must be accountable for outcomes, and a critical outcome is graduates' ability to make a positive difference in the learning and achievement of their students. As a parent as well as

teacher educator, I want to know that from day one, whoever steps into a classroom has the knowledge and skills to work effectively with all children.

One important move that we have made is to require all prospective teachers to pass a performance assessment of teaching before they enter the classroom – much like a road test for drivers, or more aptly, the practical component of the board examination for physicians. Once novices become teachers of record, we want to continue to gauge their effectiveness. For both substantive and technical reasons, we find current value-added measurement approaches highly problematic. Aside from challenges in methodology, and the documented unreliability of these measures, value-added estimates cannot provide insight into why things are working or not, or how to improve. We need assessments that provide credible and concrete indicators of our candidates' abilities to support student learning.

There are ongoing efforts to develop more appropriate measures of teaching effectiveness. At Vanderbilt, we currently rely on two kinds of measures, and are experimenting with two more.

- Before they graduate, candidates in early childhood, elementary, secondary and music education must pass the edTPA, a national, externally scored, performance-based measure of candidates' abilities to plan, enact, and assess teaching and learning of rigorous content. While our candidates' performance on this assessment has generally been strong, our early work with the edTPA prototype suggested that candidates struggled to analyze student work systematically and give students usable feedback. In response we increased attention to these areas in coursework and field assignments, and have since seen improvement both on the assessment and in candidates' actual teaching. (Based on very preliminary results, we find that strong performance on edTPA is correlated with strong ratings of teacher effectiveness. This demands larger scale study.)
- Once candidates take positions teaching, we collect survey data on employer and graduate satisfaction – one, three, and five years out from graduation. These surveys ask principals and graduates to rate graduates' readiness to teach in their subject area, work with diverse learners, translate theory into practice, establish safe and productive learning environments, navigate school structures, adapt curriculum and differentiate instruction, manage behavior, etc. We are gratified to have a return rate of over 70% on these surveys. The data indicate that our graduates feel very well prepared for the classroom, and are highly satisfied with both courses/field experiences and the faculty and students with whom they worked. Employers similarly rate graduates as very well prepared, and indicate that they would definitely hire another graduate from our institution.
- We have begun to experiment with surveys of student perceptions of the

classrooms in which our graduates teach. Recent studies show interesting correlations between the degree to which students feel challenged and supported and their achievement.

- We are attempting to work with graduates to gather their administrators' ratings of their classroom teaching as measured by state-approved observation protocols.

This collection of measures, combined with benchmark assessments throughout our programs, provide faculty with invaluable data to check impact and support program improvement.

How Can Federal Policy Advance Teacher Preparation?

Before I close, let me call out and briefly describe two areas in which federal policy makers can help support improvement of teacher preparation.

- Incentivize partnerships between schools and preparation programs;
- Streamline reporting to focus on data that will help answer questions that can move the field, and seek efficiencies in reporting.

Incentivize Partnerships and Innovation

At Peabody we are fortunate to have several school partners who are working seriously with us to innovate around school organization, a large pool of academically accomplished applicants, and the flexibility that comes with relatively small size. However, growing this work beyond small pilots will require that more institutions and districts are freed up to innovate; learning from this work will require ongoing investment in design-oriented research that allows us study the kinds of partnerships I've described above – not only in places like Vanderbilt, but also in the large public universities that prepare the vast majority of teachers in this country. Legislation that incentivizes partnerships and supports research is vital.

Streamline and Focus Reporting

Federal policy makers would also help by ensuring that reporting requirements are targeted and productive, efficient and fair.

When we invest time in collecting data, it should be the sort of data that will help us ask and answer questions that will improve our work locally, and move the field more broadly. Currently much data is collected, but it is unclear what is used and what is useful. We need to know: who is entering teacher preparation, what kinds of programs prepare them to be successful, and in what kinds of contexts? These are questions of recruitment, relevance, and impact. Current Title II elements that can begin to help us unpack the question of who is attending and succeeding in what kinds of programs include:

- basic demographic data about graduates by institution and field and pass rate data from credentialing exams;
- comparable information for alternate routes (recognizing that the definition of “alternate route” should be further studied as states define them differently and one state’s “alternate route” may be another state’s “traditional program”)
- entry requirements along with actual data on program entrants performance in relation to these requirements (e.g., GPA, test scores, etc.)

Getting at questions of impact is trickier. State capacity to link learning outcomes with teachers, and teachers with preparation programs varies greatly. As state data systems come online, useful data will include:

- evidence of student learning
- job placement of program completers within 12 months of graduation
- retention of program completers in teaching after three years
- results of teacher evaluation

I should note that there is promising work on this question underway in the states and professional associations. In Tennessee for example, the Department of Education and Higher Education Commission have partnered with universities to make available to campuses more and better data on graduate performance, and to expand the range of program effectiveness indicators tracked in the State Report Card on Teacher Education. The goal is more accurate, finer grained and more usable information with which to improve programs. At a national level, after rolling out a set of rigorous standards for educator preparation, the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) is now working with states and institutions to press hard on the question of what constitutes evidence of effective practice. These collaborations should be supported.

University-based educator preparation programs typically gather and report data for four or more monitoring bodies. The type of data is fairly similar, e.g., enrollment, demographics, completer numbers, as well as measures of program quality. However, varying reporting windows (for example, capturing completers from September 1 – August 31 vs. July 1 – June 30) exponentially increase the workload, especially as program sizes increase. Over the past few years, different monitoring agencies have begun to better align definitions and windows, but there are still discrepancies. Federal policy guidelines should encourage common data definitions and reporting windows.

Finally, reporting and accountability demands must be applied consistently across preparation pathways and models. Larger public universities have many fewer resources and yet face the most burdensome requirements for reporting and providing evidence of impact. If reporting and evidence requirements are intended to make the system better, it only makes sense for those regulations to apply in equal measure to all preparation organizations. Specifically, states should be required to report data for *all* teacher preparation providers (university, non-profit, school districts, etc.) in order to

track the performance in each route.

Final Thoughts

I began my remarks highlighting three challenges that define the context for teacher preparation: a growing gap in student outcomes that aligns with the deepening divide in wealth and opportunity; a workforce that is increasingly comprised of newcomers; and the inability to (re)build instructional capacity because of high levels of churn in schools that most need stability. Teacher preparation is not the sole solution to these challenges, but rather must be seen as part of a systemic response. Research tells us that well-prepared teachers stay in schools longer; that teachers who have at least five years of experience are more effective. Schools that support teacher learning and development both retain effective teachers and increase student achievement. For these reasons, at Vanderbilt we are redesigning our programs from a systems view, betting that our preparation programs will improve as we find ways to align our needs and resources with those of our school partners, and to think synergistically to address many problems at once.

The stakes are high. Our nation's global competitiveness will hinge on our ability to ensure that all children have the opportunity and resources to learn – including teachers who have the commitment, knowledge, skills and staying power to enable student success. Thank you for your consideration and efforts on behalf of learners and teachers, and for the opportunity to testify before you today. I look forward to answering your questions.

Chairman ROKITA. Thank you, Doctor.
Dr. Peske, you are recognized for 5 minutes.

STATEMENT OF DR. HEATHER G. PESKE, ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER FOR EDUCATOR QUALITY, MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION, MALDEN, MA, DEMOCRAT WITNESS

Ms. PESKE. Thank you for the opportunity to testify this morning. I care deeply about the issue of educator effectiveness not only because it is my job but because right now my first-grade daughter is sitting in a public school classroom in Massachusetts.

Just last night I was meeting with faculty and administrators from educator preparation programs. One professor made the confession, "Within our program the quality of the teaching placements varies tremendously across our placement sites."

Three months from now hundreds of graduates from Massachusetts' colleges and universities will graduate with a license to teach. They will look for jobs—some in Massachusetts, some in your districts. Some of them will be well prepared and some of them will be ill-equipped for the challenges of the classroom. This must change.

In Massachusetts we are building a comprehensive system of educator preparation strategy to ensure that these program graduates make impact with their students. The comprehensive strategy includes four components, which I will outline and describe briefly today.

The first component is standards and accountability. We have new regulations for educator preparation program approval in order to strengthen program accountability. We have a revised program review and approval process in order to build a robust evidentiary base from which to decide whether a program can continue or whether it should be closed down.

The second component is investing in local districts. It is essential that local school districts and schools are invested in educator preparation. We require programs to report on these partnerships and how the partnerships specifically impact the candidates and, more importantly, how they impact the students.

This year we will conduct and publicly report on surveys of district personnel in order to gather data on their level of satisfaction with the program graduates who have been hired as teachers and administrators in their schools. We hope these data will catalyze conversation and further innovation.

The third component is transparency of data and reporting. For every preparation program in our commonwealth, including our alternative providers, Massachusetts publishes a publicly available Educator Preparation Program Profile. This is a way to both invest in local districts and also to provide data for the educator prep programs and the alternative programs themselves.

For the first time we are linking educator workforce data and educator effectiveness data to educator preparation programs. We will report this annually and publicly on things like program graduates' educator evaluation ratings, program graduates' impact in producing growth in student learning, employment data, as well as the survey data I mentioned a moment ago. By analyzing the data

from the programs, along with other data, we will be able to identify low-and high-performing programs, programs we should replicate and programs we should not continue.

The fourth component of our strategy is support. We are committed to providing programs with easy-to-access analytic reports on a variety of data to answer a number of different types of questions, such as the following: Where are my program graduates being employed? Do they stay? How long?

I want to shift now to talk about the federal role. We believe in Massachusetts there is a critical role for the federal government in promoting effective teacher education programs, so I appreciate your consideration of the following three ideas.

First, we need help from you in order to support and disseminate research on effective programs. The current research is really limited in being able to answer questions like, which components of educator preparation are most impactful when it comes to producing growth with students? Much in the same way as the federal government now supports the What Works Clearinghouse for local school and district policy and practice, we need a similar analogue in educator preparation.

Second—and this has been mentioned already by my colleagues—we need help in Title II reporting. We need you to reduce the hundreds of data elements we are now required to report on. We need you to develop common metrics and we need you to focus on the highest-priority data.

Right now my staff spends far too much time collecting meaningless data to report on Title II. There is little or no comparability across the states when we report on these elements, and the metrics and definitions are not common.

We also need a stronger focus in Title II reporting on outcomes data rather than the hundreds of input measures we provide for you now.

Number three: We need to provide federal subsidies to establish new clinical models. Our clinical sites are suffering. We need funding to sustain these areas.

Right now the federal government provides subsidies to teaching hospitals in order to train the next generation of doctors. We need something similar in terms of training the next generation of teachers.

Without this federal subsidy some hospitals might not take on the task of training doctors. The same is true for our local school districts, and I can talk a little bit more in the questions about the details of that.

I want to conclude with a short story. On July 3, 1839 three young women braved a thunderstorm to enroll in Massachusetts' first state-supported school dedicated to training teachers—the first Normal School in America. This year, 2014, marks the 175th anniversary of the Normal School in Massachusetts.

As we as a nation reflect on our history of educating teachers we have to ask ourselves now, what can and should we do to ensure that the experiences of teacher and principal candidates prepare them to promote and to excel in developing college-and career-ready students?

I look forward to the discussion and happily answer your questions. Thank you again for the opportunity.
[The statement of Dr. Peske follows:]



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Testimony to the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Education and the Workforce Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Training

Prepared Testimony of Heather G. Peske, Ed.D., Associate Commissioner for Educator Quality,
Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

Chairman Rokita, Ranking Member McCarthy, Chairwoman Foxx, Ranking Member Hinojosa and
Members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to testify this morning on the importance
of efforts to strengthen the teaching profession and the role of educator preparation.

On July 3, 1839, three young women enrolled in a new school of higher education in Lexington,
Massachusetts. This school was the first state-supported school dedicated to training teachers. This year
marks the 175th anniversary of the Normal School in Massachusetts.¹ Then, as now, teacher preparation
was a critical component in ensuring teachers could enter the classroom and be successful in their work
with students.

As we reflect on our long history of teacher education in Massachusetts, the present and future beg this
question: Will the experiences of teacher and principal candidates in our educator preparation programs
ensure these aspiring educators will be ready to promote college and career ready students?

Mission and Context

We seek to guarantee that educator preparation in Massachusetts will result in effective educators
ready to support the success of all students. We believe preparation should not be strictly about pre-
service; we need to structure the first few years on the job as a continuation of preparation through
apprenticeships, induction programs and the continued involvement of higher education. As a point of
reference, it is important to consider some context about our state:

- Massachusetts enrolls just under 1 million students in nearly 400 districts across our Commonwealth.
- At present, there are 80 "sponsoring organizations" that manage educator preparation programs for principal and teacher candidates. These 80 sponsoring organizations include the traditional university-based programs as well as alternative programs.
- These 80 sponsoring organizations run over 1,800 programs of preparation. A number of institutions, like Bridgewater State University, one of our largest producers, run multiple programs from early childhood undergraduate programs to graduate programs in various high school license areas.

¹ Source: <http://www.framingham.edu/henry-whittemore-library/archives-and-special-collections/150-years-in-framingham/our-history.html>

- Per regulations and statute² the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE) is responsible for reviewing and approving programs. In approving programs, ESE authorizes sponsoring organizations to endorse candidates for both initial and advanced levels of licensure.
- On average, sponsoring organizations endorse approximately 6,600 candidates for various Massachusetts' licenses each year.
- When it comes to the balance of theory and practice, we would like to see even more emphasis and opportunities for candidates to have clinical experience (e.g., student teaching, practicum).

Building a Comprehensive System

Massachusetts has been building a comprehensive system of educator effectiveness policies to promote educator efficacy at every step of an educator's career continuum, from pre-service to in-service. As we develop state educator policy, we are increasingly focused on the importance of aligning the policies across this career continuum to build a comprehensive system to develop, recruit, hire, support and retain effective educators. We have to consider the fundamental question: Which policy and practice levers are going to be most impactful? For example, how will changes in licensure policy impact changes to educator preparation requirements? To fully leverage the opportunity to push for stronger accountability and greater support for educator effectiveness, these policies have to be inter-connected to build a comprehensive system of accountability and support to attain the goal of ensuring an effective educator in every classroom in Massachusetts, especially our highest-need classrooms and schools.

Much of our work in Massachusetts in the past three years has been supported by federal funding through the "Race to the Top" initiative. By far the biggest initiative is the implementation of a new Educator Evaluation system. In 2011, the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education adopted [new regulations](#) for the evaluation of all Massachusetts educators. This launched a massive statewide effort to implement a pioneering new model to document and evaluate educator performance and to provide meaningful feedback. In 2012-2013, Massachusetts' Race to the Top districts began implementing the new Educator Evaluation Framework. By 2014-2015, all educators in the Commonwealth, regardless of RTTT participation, will be evaluated under the new Educator Evaluation Framework.

The new Educator Evaluation Framework is designed to:

- Promote growth and development amongst leaders and teachers,
- Place student learning at the center, using multiple measures of student learning, growth, and achievement,
- Recognize excellence in teaching and leading,
- Set a high bar for professional teaching status, and
- Shorten timelines for improvement.

The Educator Evaluation Framework includes standards and indicators that outline the state's expectations for educator performance on a [Model Rubric](#). This is the first time the state has articulated expectations for educator performance along dimensions and ratings of practice from "Exemplary" to "Unsatisfactory." We are working now to align our educator preparation policies with the new Educator Evaluation Framework as well as other educator effectiveness policies.

² [Regulations for Educator Licensure and Preparation Program Approval](#) (603 CMR 7.00), Massachusetts General Laws, [M.G.L. Chapter 71, Section 38G](#)

Building a Comprehensive System for Educator Preparation

Massachusetts is building a comprehensive system to promote effective preparation of teachers and principals in our state, educators who will well-serve our students as soon as they enter the classroom. This comprehensive system includes four components:

1. Standards and Accountability;
2. Investing local district stakeholders as critically important consumers;
3. Transparency of data and reporting;
4. Support.

These four foci come together to promote the continuous improvement of programs and to meet the goal of ensuring that educator preparation results in effective educators ready to support the success of all students.

Standards and Accountability

Standards

In June 2012, the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) approved new regulations for educator preparation program approval.³ The regulations are intended to strengthen accountability by using the candidates' performance evaluation ratings data once they are teachers of record, employment data and survey data to determine whether the programs can continue to operate in the state. Together, the revised regulations and new Program Guidelines communicate a shift in the program approval process, a shift that includes program outcome measures. These outcome measures will indicate whether (or not) programs are preparing graduates who are ready to effectively teach and lead in the Commonwealth's schools; and whether (or not) programs are preparing educators to assume positions in high-needs placements across the Commonwealth.

Teachers in Massachusetts can achieve an initial license for five years provided they have completed an approved educator preparation program and passed the requirements of the Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure (MTEL). The tests include a subject test and a separate test which assesses teacher candidates' communication and literacy skills. Additionally, for the purpose of strengthening the mathematics content knowledge and skills of prospective elementary and special education teachers, a new Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure (MTEL) General Curriculum test with a separately scored mathematics subtest was developed and was administered for the first time on March 7, 2009.

In this comprehensive system we are building, we are aligning the educator preparation work to a re-engineering of our licensure policies as another strategy to drive improvement in preparation based on the needs of local school districts. In the next two years, we will be re-designing our licensure policies to promote a performance-based licensure system aligned with other educator effectiveness policies, including educator preparation. This work is being supported as part of the "Network for Transforming Educator Preparation" in collaboration with the Chief State School Officers.

³ Regulations for Educator Licensure and Preparation Program Approval (603 CMR 7.00), Massachusetts General Laws, M.G.L Chapter 71, Section 38G

Accountability: New Program Review and Approval Process

We are currently developing a revised program review and approval process to build a robust evidentiary base for evaluation and decisions about program approval (or revocation). We will develop a solid evidentiary base undergirded by data from an offsite and an onsite review. This process will emphasize an outcomes-focused program review that leads to a summative evaluation. We are also building stronger definitions of at-risk, low performing and high performing programs and aligning those definitions with HEA Title II. To date, Massachusetts has not identified any program as low-performing. In order to make more differentiated decisions about program approval, we need to have a stronger evidence base with both input and outcomes data and a more transparent review process that invests both the educator preparation program and the local schools they serve as partners in the review.

The new program approval standards hold programs accountable for continuous improvement, collaboration with local school districts, program impact on those local school districts, program capacity, and their ability to deliver on the subject matter knowledge and pedagogical standards for candidates. Further, the new review and approval process will give us the opportunity to identify high-performing programs and to learn from them.

Investing K-12 Stakeholders as Consumers

Investing local schools and districts in educator preparation is critical to supporting the kinds of innovations that will ensure candidates are well-prepared to hit the ground running after they complete the programs. On a recent site visit during a review of a program, it was evident that some of the innovations in the preparation program had occurred as a result of a deep partnership with the local district. For example, the principal of the high school explained that he contacted a faculty member at the preparation program to invite him to teach his high school methods course in the high school (rather than in a classroom at the university). As a result of this invitation, the course is embedded in the routines of the high school and the pre-service teachers have the opportunity to observe other teachers and students in action, even as they learn the theories and methods to support their actions. According to the high school principal and to some of the pre-service candidates participating in the course, this fluidity between the practice and the theory has meant enormous benefit and substantial learning for them.

Another example of innovation took place in an elementary school. Instead of assigning the student-teacher candidates to one teacher for the whole year, the principal assigned student-teacher candidates to multiple classrooms and grade levels throughout the year. She reasoned that upon successful completion of the program, the state issues licenses in first through sixth grade. For them to only spend time in one elementary grade level before being placed in an entirely different one as a teacher of record would be a disservice to the candidate and to the students. These innovations in preparation were being driven by the needs of local districts and schools and the program was responding. This is the kind of work we hope to see continue in our state as a result of changes in expectations for the programs.

It is essential that local school districts are invested in educator preparation, as they are the primary consumers of the programs. Thus, ESE expects preparation programs to be responsive to the needs of the districts and schools both in terms of the supply-and-demand issues of districts as well as the content of the programs. We know from our analyses of our Massachusetts educator workforce data that program graduates usually search for teaching jobs very close to the program from which they graduated. In the new program regulations and standards of performance, there is a provision that requires educator preparation programs to demonstrate evidence of “deep, interactive partnerships

with K12 districts” and “recruitment, enrollment and employment that address the needs of districts.” (See regulations: [603 CMR 7.03](#)). In their annual reporting of data to ESE, educator preparation programs must report on the types of district partnerships and collaborations in which they are involved. The formal evaluation requires that they demonstrate that partnerships have improved outcomes for educator preparation candidates and PK-12 students.

In addition to the qualitative data, ESE will report annually and publicly on the employment data of program completers. These data include, among other elements, the percentage of program graduates employed in a Massachusetts public school within 1, 2, and 3-years of completion of the program and the percentage employed who stay for at least 2, 3 or 4-years. These data will help programs to know to what extent they are meeting the demand needs of local districts and to what extent their program graduates are being retained by the districts.

ESE will also conduct and publicly report on annual surveys of district personnel, including Human Resource directors and principals, to gather data on their level of satisfaction with the program graduates who have been hired as teachers and principals in their district. These data will catalyze programs and districts to not only analyze whether program graduates are well-serving the district, but also to begin to work together to make improvements and to promote innovation.

Transparency of Data and Reporting

Massachusetts has changed the types of data we collect from educator preparation programs. Where we used to only collect input data (e.g., syllabi, information about faculty), we are now collecting more outcomes data in addition to the input data. We are also better linking the available data from districts to educator preparation programs. For every preparation program in the Commonwealth, including the alternative providers, Massachusetts publishes an Educator Preparation Program Profile. Massachusetts first released Educator Preparation Profiles in July 2013. These profiles appear on the Department of Education’s website, right alongside our district and school profiles, publicly accessible data to any consumer or program.

As part of our expectation for continuous improvement in the program and our commitment to using data to drive improvements, ESE collects and reports qualitative and quantitative program data. The qualitative data elements include program mission and annual goals. The quantitative data include data on program participants, such as: single and aggregate pass rates on the Massachusetts Test of Educator Licensure (MTEL) and pass rates by each of the assessments; summary pass rates on the MTEL at the point of enrollment, non-practicum completion and program completion. Additionally, we are very pleased to be linking educator workforce data and educator effectiveness data for the first time. These data elements include: program graduates’ educator evaluation ratings, program graduates’ impact in producing growth in student learning, employment and survey data. By analyzing the data from the programs along with other data such as school employment data and teacher evaluation results, the Department will be able to identify low- and high-performing programs and present the information to the public in a user-friendly, online format. With the collection and analysis of these data, ESE will be able to better identify strong programs worthy of recognition and replication and eliminate those programs failing to produce the types of educators required for the needs of Massachusetts’ schools.

Support

ESE is committed to supporting the educator preparation programs in their continuous improvement to well-prepare candidates and to well-serve our students. One way we do this is by providing the programs with easy-to-access analytic reports on a variety of program data. ESE built a powerful

reporting and data analysis tool we call “Edwin Analytics” that gives educator preparation programs and districts access to new information and should catalyze self-assessment. The available tools and reports for this data will help program staff make informed decisions about how and where they can improve upon their practices to provide an exceptional learning experience for their candidates. The Educator Effectiveness Reports for educator preparation programs, to be released within the next six months, will allow the organizations to answer questions such as:

- What are the enrollment, persistence, and completion trends for the cohort from an individual Prep Programs, as well as statewide?
- For a selected year, what is the pipeline of candidates by subject area?
- Where are completers finding employment in the state?
- How are completers performing in their Massachusetts educator evaluations? Is there any variance between programs and/or districts?
- Did candidates gain a license in the fields they were endorsed in? What other licenses did they gain?
- Do students find employment teaching subjects they were endorsed in?

The Federal Role

There is a critical role for the federal government in promoting effective educator preparation policy and practice. We appreciate your consideration of the following ideas:

Support and disseminate research on effective programs

The current research is limited in answering a number of questions about educator preparation, such as “Which components of educator preparation are most impactful when it comes to student growth and learning?” The federal government has a role in supporting and disseminating research on the practices and features of more effective teacher preparation programs, much in the same way that the federal government has supported the “What Works Clearinghouse” for best practices in local school and district work.

Title II Reporting: Reduce data elements, develop common metrics, and focus on the highest priority data

Presently, states like Massachusetts spend far too much time collecting meaningless data for Title II reporting purposes. There is little or no comparability across the states when reporting on these data elements as there are no common definitions or standards for the data elements. We need a stronger focus on the data elements that are most important and common definitions of these metrics so there is uniform reporting across the states. We also need strong outcomes measures as well as input measures. One example of a meaningful input measure might be for states to report on the regulations governing the amount of time required for candidates to be in classrooms. Examples of strong outcomes measures include program completer survey data or measures of program completers’ impact on students using multiple measures. We would like to see data collection that explores the connections between the inputs and the outcomes. The key is defining what counts as important, such as the state requirements for the number of practicum hours or hours in classrooms; or the background of the clinical staff who supervise, such as what percentage of the faculty have taught in the past 10 years.

Provide federal subsidies to establish “teaching hospital schools” to build innovative models of preparation

We are presently lacking the capacity for bridging the gap between preparation in higher education and clinical preparation; we need structures that can help to provide high-quality clinical training while partnering with higher education and local school districts. The federal government currently provides

subsidies to teaching hospitals to train interns and residents. Without this federal subsidy, some hospitals might not take on the expensive work of training the next generation of doctors. The federal government could reallocate funding to establish “teaching hospital schools” in major urban areas that would be a) centers for high quality clinical training for teachers serving low-income students or low-performing schools; b) host applied research to promote a quality improvement process driven by practical and useful research and data embedded in the work; c) forge partnerships between local districts and teacher preparation programs, including traditional and alternative program providers that meet certain criteria; d) partner with other schools to build capacity to support high quality field training.⁴

Conclusion

We urge all stakeholders engaged in the preparation of future educators to embrace this opportunity to create experiences for educator candidates to ensure the success of all students in our nation. We believe Massachusetts’ efforts to transform educator preparation will yield fruit in providing meaningful feedback for the continuous improvement of all programs. In Massachusetts, we are banking on the combination of new program review and approval standards; better and more accessible statewide data; a stronger accountability process for review and approval; and a commitment to investing local school and district stakeholders in improving educator preparation. We are encouraged by the interest and commitment of the federal government in supporting this critical work.

⁴ This recommendation came out of conversations with Jesse Solomon and Edward Liu, senior leaders at the Boston Teacher Residency Program (www.bostonteacherresidency.org), an alternative program provider.

Chairman ROKITA. Thank you, Doctor.
Ms. Hall, you are recognized for 5 minutes.

STATEMENT OF MS. CHRISTINA HALL, CO-FOUNDER AND CO-DIRECTOR, URBAN TEACHER CENTER, BALTIMORE, MD

Ms. HALL. Thank you.

Chairman Rokita and Chairwoman Foxx, Representative Polis, and members of the subcommittee, thank you for inviting me here today to speak with you about this important topic—teacher quality.

My name is Christina Hall and I am cofounder of Urban Teacher Center. We are a nonprofit that partners with urban schools and districts to prepare new teachers.

We have 231 teachers in almost 75 schools in Baltimore and D.C. Program satisfaction is high—100 percent of our teachers report that our training gives them the knowledge and skills they need, and 90 percent of our school partners returned this year. This is testament to our value because principals pay to bring us to their buildings.

Best of all, we can already see that our teachers are getting results. Last year 79 percent—that is 79—79 percent of our first-year teachers had student achievement gains equal to or better than the typical second-year teacher.

When we set out to build our program we knew that holding a degree in teaching is not a proxy for effectiveness, but because of prevailing compensation systems we wanted to offer an M.Ed. We considered applying to become our own institute of higher ed, but an often onerous and sometimes irrelevant process kept us from seriously considering it.

Instead, we looked for a partner that would embrace broader criteria for hiring clinical faculty, embark on creating a whole new preparation program, and accept responsibility for master's conferral while releasing approval for certification to UTC. We spoke with almost a dozen colleges and universities and eventually found Lesley University in Massachusetts. Lesley agreed to take the leap with us.

Here are a few features of our model: Residents get more than 1,400 hours of real-time experience in four different classroom settings before they get the keys to their own classroom. Every successful candidate earns dual certification and a dual master's in their subject area and special education. And every participant receives sustained, on-the-job coaching for 4 years.

UTC holds the highest bar for teacher certification in the country, and not every teacher who begins our program gets certified. Even with intensive support not every promising candidate develops the qualities of a great teacher. We believe it is better that we incur the cost of that discovery than our children.

We begin by recruiting diverse, high-achieving, results-oriented individuals. Only 25 percent of applicants are accepted into our program and only 77 percent of our residents go on to become teachers of record in year 2. Forty percent of departures in the first year are voluntary; the other 60 percent don't meet our rigorous expectations.

UTC's attrition is strategic, intentional, and minimizes disruption to student learning. We are very proud to say that we have had almost zero attrition during the school year in 3 years in Washington, D.C., and only two instances in 3 years in Baltimore. That is an extraordinary rate for new teachers in these challenging districts.

Participants who meet our bar for practice and coursework earn a master's degree after 2 years, but full, permanent certification takes longer. We only approve teachers for full certification after they have proven their effectiveness through student achievement gains and observable classroom practice. It is an intensive process involving multiple measures but our logic is simple: We believe the best way to guarantee that new teachers will be effective is to show that they have been effective.

In our experience, at least three challenges should be addressed in order to ensure a great teacher every time for every student. We would encourage policy leaders at all levels to focus on broadening access to existing federal dollars.

Open up the routing of funds intended for K-12 systems by allowing districts to partner with institutions of higher ed and innovative organizations. Opening up access with quality control safeguards focused on outputs will result in stronger partnerships for K-12 school systems to improve teacher preparation.

Next, encouraging environments at the state level that are more hospitable to alternative cert providers. In order to foster more innovation in all markets, encourage states to permit alt cert providers to enter the teacher prep market. The best legislation will support and not encumber existing innovation while simultaneously encouraging new innovation.

Last, spotlighting what works, as I heard from a colleague up here on the panel. Because we haven't any time to waste, innovation and practice across the sector should be accompanied by an assessment of what works and what doesn't. The federal government can be a valuable resource here in evaluating and providing information on effective practice, partnership models and design to inform the entire sector and eliminate duplication of efforts.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify about our model, and I look forward to fielding questions, if any, on this important topic.

[The statement of Ms. Hall follows:]

**SUBCOMMITTEE ON EARLY CHILDHOOD, ELEMENTARY,
AND SECONDARY EDUCATION JOINTLY WITH THE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION AND
WORKFORCE TRAINING**

February 27, 10:00 a.m.

Hearing on “Exploring Efforts to Strengthen the Teaching
Profession.”

Witness Testimony: Christina Hall, Urban Teacher Center

Chairman Rokita and Chairwoman Foxx, Ranking Members Carolyn McCarthy and Ruben Hinojosa, and esteemed Members of the Subcommittee, thank you for inviting me here today to speak with you about what research and experience shows is the single most important in-school factor impacting student outcomes: the quality of the teacher each student is assigned each year, or what we at the Urban Teacher Center have come to call the “teacher lottery.”

My name is Christina Hall, and I am a co-founder and co-director of Urban Teacher Center, a nonprofit that partners with urban schools and districts to prepare new teachers who are guaranteed to be effective from day one.

Four years ago, Jennifer Green and I set out with a big vision: We’d design a teacher preparation program from the ground up that would provide a great teacher, every time, for our nation’s hardest-to-staff schools. We understood the importance of preparing diverse teachers, equipped to meet the learning needs of every child and committed to staying in the profession long enough to have a real impact. We’d learned from pioneering programs in urban teacher preparation and felt ready to push to the next level. Despite recent innovations in teacher education, many high-need schools still struggle to fill positions, and they face a gamble with each hire: while some new teachers get great results, others are woefully unequipped to help students learn at high levels. We believe that schools deserve a guarantee that every teacher they hire is able to significantly improve student outcomes and that the responsibility for making that guarantee should be on us, teacher educators.

We’ve had tremendous success in our first four years of operation. We currently have 231 teachers-in-training working in almost 150 schools in Baltimore and D.C., with incoming classes growing every year in response to growing demand. We expect to expand to more cities in the next few years. Program satisfaction remains high: 100% of our teacher residents report that UTC training has given them the knowledge and skills needed to be an

effective teacher, and nearly 90% of our school partners returned for school year 2013-14—a real testament to our program’s value, as school leaders must dedicate scarce resources to bring UTC teachers, and related supports, into their schools. Best of all, we can already see that our teachers are getting results: Last year, 79% of our first-year teachers had equal or better student learning results than their second-year peers.

Our mission is to dramatically improve student performance in our partner schools while serving as an example of what is possible in teacher education for the nation. Today, I’d like to speak with you about what UTC has learned that it takes to guarantee a great teacher every time. Such a bold promise is both essential and possible, but it requires a fundamental rethinking of how we partner with schools, how we deliver curriculum (and the role higher education plays in that process), and how and to whom we grant teacher certification.

UTC’s Unique, Multi-Year Approach: Let me begin by offering more context about how we’ve structured our program. We recruit aspiring teachers who commit to working in our partner schools for four years. That’s right: four years. They spend the first 13 months (two summers, plus a full school year) working side-by-side with experienced teachers in host classrooms, while taking graduate-level courses designed by UTC that are tied to their work with students in real classrooms. Residents, as we call our first-year participants, must meet a high bar in their coursework and clinical practice, and at the end of year one, those who meet our rigorous requirements move on to become “fellows.” Fellows take on salaried, full-time teaching positions in partner schools, while they take coursework and receive intensive coaching support from our clinical faculty. At the end of year two, those who meet our bar earn a dual masters’ degree in special education and their content area. After three years, we grant certification to only those who’ve met a high bar in their coursework, in classroom observations, and in raising student learning outcomes.

The model is intensive and requires significant commitments from host schools, our faculty and higher education partner, and from the aspiring teachers themselves.

Schools as a training ground and a customer: One way we are different from other teacher preparation programs is that we treat the public schools where our teachers serve as customers. We partner with district and charter schools that want to grow their own talent. They pay a sizeable fee for each resident or fellow and agree to provide the residency and teaching classroom placements that serve as the teaching and learning labs where UTC develops its teachers. In return, we promise them that our teachers will get results with students and help them leverage school-wide transformation by serving as teacher leaders and a positive professional influence on the school community.

Nikki Stewart, Chief Academic Officer at Excel Public Charter School in D.C., is among the school leaders who’ve come to view UTC as a critical part of their human capital strategy. She says: *“Because of the preparation and evaluation they receive, UTC teachers are not like other first-year teachers. With UTC, I have a pipeline of effective teachers into my school who immediately add more value.”*

One mile from here there are two schools that illustrate how school partnerships like ours can be a powerful lever for change. Both of these public schools serve the same

demographics in the same neighborhood, Ward 8, but one school, a charter, is high performing while the other, a traditional district school, has been deemed underperforming. The district superintendent asked the charter operators to enter into a new kind of partnership, working with the district to operate the underperforming school and extend effective practices to more neighborhood children. The charter operator has tapped UTC to help it get ready. This year, Urban Teacher Center is training and supporting 13 residents and teachers in the high-performing school. These teachers-in-training are being immersed in the best practices of this high-performing charter while participating in UTC's intensive and rigorous clinical program. Next year, a team of five to seven of these teachers will move to the school down the street, where they will help to launch its transformation.

UTC's transformation strategy with partner districts is similar to the role we play in schools. We aim to become a supplier of excellent teachers to the neediest 75% of schools in a district by placing teams of teachers, who have demonstrated their effectiveness and who are committed to teach for multiple years, in each school, where they tip the performance of the whole school, thereby tipping the performance of the entire district.

A partnership model like ours requires significant commitments from schools and districts, but they are willing to make these commitments because they understand that working with UTC can be a critical piece of a human capital strategy that turns around whole schools and districts.

A teacher education curriculum built from the ground up: Too often, teacher education programs take a "little of this, little of that" approach to curriculum but do little to help teacher candidates integrate new knowledge or connect it to classroom practice. They grant a masters degree along with recommendation for certification upon graduation, with no way of tracking how their graduates perform in actual classrooms or using that data to inform their program.

When we set out to build our preparation program, we knew that holding a masters degree in teaching is not a proxy for effectiveness, but because of the prevailing compensation systems that tie pay to coursework and degrees, offering an M.Ed had to be a component of our program. We considered applying to become our own institute of higher education, but an onerous and often irrelevant process kept us from seriously considering it. (Just as an example, applications asked about the physical size of the library and focused more on the PhD status of professors than evidence of their success in the classroom.) Instead, we set out to find an existing institution that shared our vision and would be willing to rethink curriculum from the ground up. We looked for a higher education partner that would embrace broader criteria for hiring clinical faculty, embark on creating a wholly new program, and accept responsibility for master's conferral while releasing approval for certification recommendations to UTC. We spoke with almost a dozen colleges and universities and eventually found Lesley University in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Lesley agreed to take the leap with us. Together, we cracked open the traditional course sequence, working with content experts from around the country to build a modular curriculum that emphasizes five areas of effective classroom practice and provides real-time opportunities for new teachers to implement what they are learning in the classroom

under the expert supervision of a coach. Importantly, UTC identifies its own course faculty (who are all experienced classroom teachers) to be hired by Lesley and mentored by professors there. We also reserve the right to make recommendations for state licensing according to our own high standard of effectiveness.

Here are just a few unique features of our curriculum model:

- Residents get more than *1,400 hours of real-time experience* in four different classroom settings, all before becoming teachers in their own classroom.
- Every successful candidate earns a dual license and masters' degree in their subject area and special education, equipping them to meet the range of student needs in typical urban classrooms.
- Every participant receives sustained, on-the-job coaching, including regular classroom observations, over the first four years of their career. These coaches are frequently the same people who teach their courses.

A high bar at every stage: UTC holds the highest bar for teacher certification in the country, and not every teacher who begins our program gets certified. Even with intensive support, not every promising candidate develops the qualities of a great urban teacher. We believe it's better that we incur the cost of that discovery than our children.

We begin by recruiting diverse, high-achieving, results-oriented individuals who are ready to commit four years to teaching in our partner schools. Only 25% of applicants are accepted into the program, and only 77% of our residents go on to become teachers of record. Of the 23% who do not make it to their own classrooms, 40% are voluntary departures; some candidates realize within the first year that a career in urban teaching is not what they thought it would be, or that they are simply not ready. Others don't meet our rigorous expectations for coursework, classroom practice, and professionalism.

Importantly, UTC's attrition is strategic, intentional, and minimizes disruptions to student learning. We're proud to say we have had almost zero attrition during the school year in three years in D.C. and only two instances in three years in Baltimore. That is an extraordinary rate for new teachers in these challenging districts.

Breaking the link between earning a degree and earning certification: Participants who meet our bar for classroom practice and coursework earn a dual master's degree after two years. Certification takes longer. We have broken the link between the master's degree and certification; one does not automatically result in the other. We only approve teachers for certification—thereby placing them on track to become permanent teachers with tenure—after they've proven their effectiveness through student learning outcomes and observable classroom practice. It takes time for new teachers to consolidate their practice and establish a track record of effectiveness, so we've created a three-year performance review process, with a tracking system to identify and support participants who are not on the path toward effectiveness.

It's an intensive process and complex (involving multiple measures), but our logic is simple: We believe the best way to guarantee that new teachers will be effective is to show that they have been effective already. Participants must meet increasing expectations in classroom observations. We also expect them to produce significant growth in student

learning; they are expected to improve student performance on our nationally normed assessments by an average of one year for a year of instruction across their first two years to earn certification. We had the good fortune to learn from the evaluation challenges of other teacher-preparation programs and decided to launch our training program in just three subject areas where we had reliable assessments to measure student growth.

We'd like to see all teacher education programs include classroom performance and student learning outcomes in their certification recommendation process. With the stakes so high for students, there is really no excuse for certifying teachers unless we know they are capable of teaching effectively.

Policy Recommendations

Teacher quality is the single most important in-school factor that determines student outcomes. In our experience, at least 3 challenges must be addressed in order to ensure a great teacher, every time, for every student. We would encourage policy leaders at all levels to focus on:

1. Broadening access to existing federal dollars

- Open up the routing of funds intended for K-12 school systems by allowing districts to partner with institutions of higher education *and* innovative organizations that commit to transparent data and reporting outcomes. Opening up access with quality control safeguards will result in stronger partnerships for K-12 school systems to improve teacher preparation.

2. Encouraging environments at the state level that are more hospitable to alternative certification providers.

- One of Urban Teacher Center's innovations is that we've broken the link between earning a master's degree and earning certification to teach. In order to foster more innovation in all teacher markets, encourage states to permit alternative certification providers to enter the teacher preparation market with consistent expectations and data and outcome reporting for all teacher preparation entities that will transparently show which entities are best serving the K-12 market. The best legislation will support and not encumber existing innovation while simultaneously encouraging new innovation.

3. Spotlighting what works. Because we haven't any time to waste, innovation and practice across the sector should be accompanied by an assessment of what works and what doesn't. The federal government can be a valuable resource in evaluating and providing information on effective practice, partnership models and design to inform the entire education sector and to eliminate duplication of efforts across states.

UTC's innovative model ensures that districts only get teachers who have demonstrated effectiveness in the classroom. The principals who hire teachers—and the children they teach—deserve assurance that a teacher will be effective. It's a promise we can make. We'd like to see all teacher-preparation programs make a similar commitment.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify about Urban Teacher Center's model. I look forward to fielding questions on the important topic of teacher quality.

Chairman ROKITA. Well, thank you, Ms. Hall.

Thank you all.

We will now proceed to member questions, and Dr. Foxx and I are offering to hold off our questioning for a while in order to accommodate possibly the schedule of other colleagues.

So with that, Mr. Walberg—Chairman Walberg, you are recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. WALBERG. Thank you so much. Appreciate your willingness to forego the questions to let further down the table go first, so thanks, though.

I really, really enjoyed hearing from each of the panelists. Having a daughter-in-law who went through that experience of first-year teaching out of college—excited to do it, was put into a full-time substitute position because the teacher before her had just walked out of the room of a special needs classroom in the south side of Chicago and never came back. My daughter-in-law loved that first year of teaching.

Second year, when she was given the class as a full-time teacher by her principal, she found out the challenges of teaching that consist of paperwork for both the Chicago Public School System, Illinois, and No Child Left Behind reporting requirements. She came to me with tears in her eyes one time and said, “Dad, I am not sure I am cut out for teaching.”

I knew that was wrong. Her principal, fortunately, knew that was wrong and talked her through that year.

So what you are talking about is so important, and appreciate what you are doing.

Dr. Peske, let me ask you, what part can a building principal play in teacher success? Are we using principals and training principals and putting them in a position that is vital for success of that first-, second-, third-year teacher to make sure the process goes well?

Ms. PESKE. Thank you for your question, Mr. Walberg. It is terrific.

You may have noticed throughout my testimony I was talking about educator preparation, so in Massachusetts that includes teachers and principals. Principals are critically important to the efficacy of teachers. They are also critically important to helping the effective teachers stay in those classrooms.

We have a whole turnaround effort in Massachusetts around some of our lowest-performing schools, and what we see is the Pied Piper Effect, which is when really effective principals leave a school to head to one of our turnaround schools their cohort of effective teachers follows them. So all of the things that I described this morning apply to our educator preparation programs, i.e. our principal preparation programs as well as our teacher preparation programs.

Mr. WALBERG. Is the principal model—could I describe it more as a mentor, coach model as opposed to administrator?

Ms. PESKE. Yes, sir. In fact, we also are really focused on principals as instructional leaders, and so our professional standards for administrators, which are the standards the preparation programs use when designing their programs, are the same exact standards that we use in the evaluation of our administrators.

So the prep programs are preparing the administrators to go in under the same standards by which they will be evaluated once they are actually in districts, and those are much less focused on kind of the business aspects of schooling, which is what we had done in the past, and much more focused on mentoring, sustaining, being an instructional leader within the school.

Mr. WALBERG. Well, I applaud you for that because—

Ms. PESKE. Thank you.

Mr. WALBERG.—because until we get principals out of their office filling paper and into the classroom knowing what their front line is doing and assisting them in that, I don't think we achieve. So thank you.

Dr. Gist, in your testimony you discussed some of the reforms Rhode Island has implemented—creative reforms in improving teacher quality. One appears to be mentoring.

You call it an induction coach—assisting teachers in their transition in the field. I would assume that that is because you don't want to waste one full year of students' lives with an ineffective teacher.

Could you discuss how this process works and its effectiveness in generating successful teachers?

Ms. GIST. Yes, sir. Thank you, actually, for asking about beginning teacher induction because it is an incredibly important part of our education system.

When we think about an educator's career we really look at the entire pipeline, and one part that occasionally gets overlooked is that part from the time they leave a preparation program when they enter that classroom for the very first time. Obviously excellent principals can assist with that, but an induction program is really a very intense program that assigns an experienced teacher coach who is released from his or her classroom on a full-time basis to be able to spend time in a variety of different beginning teachers—they have sort of a cohort of beginning teachers that they are working with.

And they spend time in their classroom; they are a trusted advisor. They are not there to evaluate; they are there to provide support and assistance as the beginning teacher goes through his or her first 2 years.

And so induction, you know, I would agree with my colleagues about the need for research, but we do have some areas where we have some research and one of them is in the importance of supporting our beginning teachers through programs like induction.

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Chairman, could I ask one concluding question?

Chairman ROKITA. Your time is expired, Chairman.

Mr. WALBERG. Okay. Thank you.

Chairman ROKITA. Mr. Polis, you are recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. POLIS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Want to address a question to—the first question to Dr. Peske.

Title II of the Higher Education Act requires states to identify low-performing schools of education. Surely they are not all high-performing or the state of the profession today would clearly be in a better place.

But in your written testimony you mention that to date Massachusetts has never identified a low-performing preparation program. Why do you think states might be hesitant to identify what clearly must exist, which are low-quality preparation programs, and what can the federal government do to ensure that states are holding preparation programs accountable and working on improving the quality?

Ms. PESKE. Thank you for your question, Mr. Polis. I did write that in my written testimony—that we have never identified a program as low-performing in Massachusetts, I think mostly because our program review and approval process was so weak in the past that we didn't have a strong evidence base from which we could declare a program low-performing.

Much in the case when you build a case, and particularly when you are building a case with bad news for your program, you want to be able to refer to some evidence to say, "This is why we are closing your program down," or, "This is why we are not approving it." In the past we didn't have that evidentiary base, and we particularly didn't have it around outcomes—that is, educator outcomes and their impact on students.

Mr. POLIS. And then moving to Title II reporting and establishing common metrics, what more can the federal government do to ensure that states have the right metrics to, in fact, improve the quality of their teacher preparation programs?

Ms. PESKE. Sure. So I will mention a couple.

We are not required to report now on hiring and retention data. We don't report on evaluation and impact ratings, which we in Massachusetts have and would be delighted to turn over to the feds and we think other states should do so as well.

We would like to see requirements for us to report on the percentage of graduates employed in high-need, low-performing districts and high-need subject areas. We also would like to be required to report on how our programs do in terms of their performance assessments.

Those are a few examples.

Mr. POLIS. Thank you.

My next question is for Ms. Hall.

You know, Urban Teacher Center is already doing a great job improving the quality of teacher preparation, harnessing the power of innovation to create a new and effective way to prepare great teachers and principals. That is consistent with why I introduced with Congressman Petri the GREAT Act, which encourages the growth and development precisely of these types of teacher or principal academies.

And I would like to ask how your model encourages innovation, ensures program quality, and what federal barriers to your success should we focus on removing?

Ms. HALL. Great. Thank you for asking. And there are lots of aspects of the GREAT Act that we do support—highly selective recruiting, clinically based programming, and most of all, focus on results.

I would say that the way that we are able to be innovative and to be innovative within the regulations and the rules as they currently exist can be embodied by other organizations. We have been

able to crack open a program of study and a course sequence for higher ed master's preparation to prepare teachers in a way that is clinically based and focused that is entirely possible for other folks that have the same appetite and same inclination.

I would say that in terms of what is next for us in terms of where are there opportunities for expansion either of UTC or of models like UTC, I will say that initially we were denied from offering federal student aid to people in our program.

That was an incredible lift for my organization. We had to go out and we raised \$20,000 for every person in our program so we could turn around and loan it to them. And we are not a bank and I am not a lender. That is a different committee. And we had to get out of that business really fast, and it took us 3-1/2 years to get federal approval to offer loans through our higher ed partner.

Mr. POLIS. Streamlined approval would be one of your suggestions?

Ms. HALL. Absolutely. Streamlining approval, and then also, wherever the federal government can provide opportunity for the organizations to stand in the same way that higher ed does and partner with K-12 school systems, we see them as our ultimate customer and we would like to have the same opportunity for existing federal funds for those partnerships and, frankly, to be able to do business in more districts and more states. Right now UTC is blocked from some states from doing business.

Mr. POLIS. By the states?

Ms. HALL. By the alt cert requirements in the states.

Mr. POLIS. Okay. Is that because they are not uniform across the states?

Ms. HALL. That is right.

Mr. POLIS. Okay. Do you see any federal role in that?

Ms. HALL. I think wherever the federal government can encourage states to be much more innovative in how they decide who is allowed to prepare teachers, so I do see a role for the federal government there. I wouldn't presume to state exactly what it is.

Mr. POLIS. You know, and this is what we see in education, often it takes the federal government to play a disruptive role to allow for choice and innovation to occur at the state or district level, particularly when you have legacy monopoly providers and it is difficult to introduce change into the system.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Chairman ROKITA. Thank the gentleman. Gentleman's time is expired.

Mrs. Brooks, you are recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. BROOKS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And welcome, everyone.

My question—I am going to start out with Dr. Singer-Gabella—is with respect to the partnerships between higher ed institutions and school districts and how important those are to ensure that we have the most effective teaching programs possible. Can you expand a bit on what your partnerships are at Vanderbilt and other higher ed institutions and really what is the role that the school district should be playing in ensuring that those partnerships are so strong?

Ms. SINGER-GABELLA. In my testimony I talked about the need for all of us to be able to innovate and be flexible around these partnerships, and we have spent the past couple of years—given that the landscape is changing for schools as well as for education preparation providers, we are trying to identify what are the needs and match them up.

At the core, really, is saying, what can you do when you have a group of talented young folks who need to learn about students, need to learn to develop relationships with students, who are really attending carefully to the assessment of student thinking and thinking about how do you link kids with content? How can we create experiences with the districts?

I pointed to a particular partnership right now that we are building with—in metro Nashville with a school that happens to be one that is on the line. It was at risk for state takeover, and so the principal and the teachers feel compelled but also really anxious to think differently and out of the box about what they are doing.

So we have been able to put—in the school we have 10 what we call—they have called “learning assistants.” These are folks who are essentially reliable members of the school staff who are working closely with students, who are working closely with teachers, and they have—those extra bodies have kind of bought flexibility in staffing arrangements so that there are teams that are collectively responsible for groups of students, we can flexibly reassign students in groups to go work with you because you happen to be really good at paying attention to student thinking and thinking about what that next step is for an English-learner in being able to make sense of certain content. But they may go to Dr. Gist and me because I am learning from Dr. Gist how it is that I am going to organize a particular subject—you know, particular content.

But the point is that we are trying to, by—think creatively and out of the box. What does it look like when you link talented educators with groups of students, and what can we do to kind of break—again, I pointed to the egg-crate model. Can we think differently about how we put adults in the building to serve learners?

But really specifically for districts, what we are talking about is matching up expertise around supports for English-learners, content tutors, mentors. We are talking about bringing in faculty who are working at the cutting edge of research and thinking about learning, and can we make those resources available to schools? And obviously for the schools of education we are providing opportunities for learners to—for our folks to be out in the real world working with real students.

Mrs. BROOKS. Dr. Gist, I have a question with respect to how Rhode Island might be partnering with higher ed institutions, particularly to help do a better job in our schools identifying students with special needs, with learning disabilities, with reading issues, and so forth. Can you comment at all on what Rhode Island might be doing with respect to higher ed training for teachers to do a better job with all those challenges in our schools?

Ms. GIST. Well, I think that in our work with our institutions of higher education and our alternative programs one of the things that we want to make sure is that our educators are prepared to work with every student in our classroom, and I think that in

many ways we have experts in our institutions of higher education who are partnering with experts in our school districts to learn from one another about how to best serve all students, including students with special needs.

We have many, many teachers in Rhode Island who are dual certified, so—Christina talked about that in terms of UTC—and I think that is really important that educators—all educators come into contact and serve students with special needs, and so I think having that preparation is very important.

Mrs. BROOKS. I certainly appreciate the dual certification and certainly hope that we can expand that across the country. Thank you.

I yield back.

Chairman ROKITA. I thank the gentlelady.

And Ms. Bonamici is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. BONAMICI. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you to all the panelists. I really appreciate your years of expertise, and especially thank you for the years that you have spent teaching. It is critical to have teachers and former teachers working to strengthen the profession, so thank you.

Dr. Singer-Gabella, you mentioned three factors that make it difficult to retain intelligent and committed individuals into the teaching profession: the absence of a real career path that allows growth while still teaching, low levels of respect and compensation, and an imbalance of interests in test scores that saps motivation. So how can these be overcome? And I know we could talk about that for a few hours, but if you could briefly address that because I do have another question as well.

Ms. SINGER-GABELLA. I think that we are really just trying to figure that out. We do feel strongly that—and I think all of the panelists here would agree that it is critical that we make sure that people who step into the classroom are ready to take on the challenges of being in classrooms and that we have measures to make sure before, you know, before they get out into that first year and they are teachers of record that they are able to do so.

But again, I think that we need to be paying—part of this is an infusion of resources, part of it is making sure that we are not relying on temporary measures, and that system churn is really highly problematic. We need to work together to try to stabilize what is going on in schools.

Ms. BONAMICI. And I also encourage all of you to join me in what I do, and especially when I am in my district, and that is to highlight the positive things—

Ms. SINGER-GABELLA. Absolutely.

Ms. BONAMICI.—that are happening in our public schools. Because I have to tell you, there is a lot of public school-bashing out there that doesn't help motivate people to enter the teaching profession.

Ms. SINGER-GABELLA. Right.

Ms. BONAMICI. So let's talk about how we can improve, but also spend a lot of time highlighting all the positive things that are happening.

Dr. Peske, I have heard a concern about accountability systems that are used that evaluate teacher preparation programs, that

they may not consider all the goals of teacher preparation. They are broader than simply increasing students' academic achievement. Focusing on the whole child—for example, strengthening students' abilities to collaborate, communicate, nurturing creativity and curiosity are also important goals, and today's teachers need to be culturally competent as well, a skill that can be difficult to measure on a certification test.

So how can we make sure that we are recruiting a diverse teaching workforce and developing educators who can challenge students from diverse cultural, ethnic, and linguistic backgrounds?

Ms. PESKE. That is a good question. We start with the goal for our programs of recruiting a diverse workforce. That is part of our expectation for them. That is built into our standards. And then we measure that with data, so we make accessible to them years' worth of data on the participants in their programs as well as how those participants do once they get to the schools.

Additionally, our professional standards for teachers, which are the standards with which the preparation programs use to build their program, those are the same standards that we use for the evaluation of our teachers once they get to the classroom, and built into those standards are expectations about meeting the needs of diverse learners.

Ms. BONAMICI. Terrific.

I have another question. Dr. Singer-Gabella pointed out, rightly so, that there is quite a bimodal distribution of school performance, with schools at one end that are doing well with respect to achievement, and a significant number of schools, typically at the lower end of the socioeconomic spectrum, that aren't doing well.

So I wanted to ask you, Ms. Hall, in your testimony you say that you treat public schools where your teachers serve as customers and you partner with district and charter schools that want to grow their talent and they pay a sizeable fee for each resident or fellow. So can you address how, then, can your residents and fellows go into schools that don't have the resources to pay a sizeable fee and whether you can measure UTC's success if you are not in a broad range of schools across the socioeconomic spectrum?

Ms. HALL. Yes. In fact, the large percentage of schools that we are in have very high farms rates, and what we do is we spend a lot of time with principals and leaders of those schools who have a very strong interest in identifying a human capital solution for that school and thinking differently about their budget. Our program is Title I and Title II approved, and oftentimes what we find folks do is they—essentially they are prioritizing choices and decisions, because folks—these schools do not get more money but they are making decisions about whether or not to hire an aide for a classroom, for example, or to hire a UTC resident, sometimes for less than what a cost of an aide would be.

We would like to bring down the cost that our schools pay, but we also think it is important for our schools to have some skin in the game along with us.

Ms. BONAMICI. Terrific.

And I see my time is expired. I yield back. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman ROKITA. I thank the gentlelady.

Mr. Guthrie is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GUTHRIE. I want to thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you for being here.

And, Dr. Singer-Gabella, I am from Bowling Green, Kentucky, so just up the road a little bit, so follow metro—a lot of, some of our media is there, and appreciate what Peabody does. And you mentioned the work, in your testimony, of reforming educator preparation is underway in states and professional associations, and you also mentioned your work in Tennessee, which you have already mentioned.

And so as we are taking a—as we are looking at Title II reauthorization for Higher Education Act, would you give some recommendations that we should be thinking of that would encourage you to do this and not hinder you from doing this? What changes would you like to see, or additions?

Ms. SINGER-GABELLA. I think there are a couple of things, and in terms of reporting, we want to be able to have questions that are going to help us—or we want to be able to use data to help us ask questions and answer questions that are going to move the field forward. So compelling questions for us are, you know, who is entering, on what paths, and how and where are they being prepared to be successful?

So can we begin to look at basic demographic data? There are pieces that are already there that I think are incredibly useful. My colleagues have pointed to other data that would also be helpful around retention a certain number of years out, employer—you know, employer outcome data. How are people doing in terms of their performance? I am not sure—is this where you are—

Mr. GUTHRIE. Your suggestions on what we need to—your expertise what we should be doing to help you is it, so that is exactly right.

But I know, Dr. Gist, I think you mentioned—I think it was you—that the Title II burdensome reporting requirements—I think you mentioned you have—

Ms. GIST. I think several of us mentioned that—

Mr. GUTHRIE. Okay. Well, I know it came from at least one of you if not all of you. So what are some examples of what you think is burdensome, and what would we do different? How would you want to do it different? It kind of ties into the same question I just asked.

Or if anybody else wanted to answer that, too, I would be—

Ms. GIST. Yes, sir. Actually, so right now in the current reporting structure there are over 400 data elements that are—actually, our preparation programs do most of the gathering and at the state level we compile that information and send it on to the federal government. And I think—

Mr. GUTHRIE. Do you see the federal government—I am sorry to interrupt—when that goes forward do you hear information back that helps you, or is it just goes forward and you don't know what happens to it?

Ms. GIST. No, it is not a very robust process. This is—

Mr. GUTHRIE. Okay.

Ms. GIST.—you know, and I think that is part of the concern is that there is a collection of data but it isn't the data that we need

to be using. And so I would agree with the recommendations that you have heard but I would—I think the federal role in policy-setting is looking at the what and not exactly the how.

So I think there are some data elements that are probably common across programs that might be useful—things like the GPA or the entrance—some sort of entrance measures for candidates who are coming into programs. I also think there are some student outcome measures, because we haven't talked a lot about that, but you know, one of the most important things we need to be looking at is whether or not those who are in our preparation programs are able to move student achievement and help our students learn.

But I think what we have to use caution about is over-prescribing exactly how to ask for that information. So what I would encourage you to consider is asking us in the states to tell you what it is we are doing to expect that our programs are setting strong selection criteria, are preparing educators well, how are they measuring that, and have us tell you the processes that we are using. And I think through that we are going to learn more and more about this as we continue to increase this area of our field.

Mr. GUTHRIE. I think that is helpful because I worked in manufacturing. If I needed an operator of a machine to give me information—record their processes—I got a lot better information if they knew what I was doing with it because they knew how it would benefit them when I came back to them to fix the process.

So I know, Dr. Peske, do you have any—I know you mentioned that, as well. Do you concur with kind of the same thought here, or—

Ms. SINGER-GABELLA. Yes.

Mr. GUTHRIE. Or Dr. Peske. Both of—any of you can—

Ms. SINGER-GABELLA. Oh, I am sorry.

Mr. GUTHRIE. Any of you can answer, yes.

Ms. SINGER-GABELLA. No, go ahead.

Mr. GUTHRIE. Any of you.

Chairman ROKITA. In 50 seconds.

Ms. PESKE. I concur. I do think there is a federal role, but I concur with the idea that we need fewer measures and more meaningful ones.

Mr. GUTHRIE. Okay.

And then I guess I am down to 30 seconds, and I was going to ask Ms. Hall how she found her students.

How do you recruit and how do you come out with your students? But you are going to have a very brief answer on that, I hope.

Ms. HALL. It will be brief.

So we recruit nationally—40 percent come from this region; 60 percent come from outside the region. Forty-four percent of our incoming class of residents last year were people of color, so that is a very high focus for our program. We do that by not only heading to college campuses but we also find that programs like City Year, Jumpstart, Breakthrough Collaborative are training folks that already have an appetite for this and have already worked in settings that are sometimes as challenging as our schools.

Mr. GUTHRIE. Well, thank you. Just perfect.

I will yield back.

Chairman ROKITA. I thank the gentleman. Gentleman's time is expired.

Mrs. DAVIS is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. DAVIS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you all for being here. I missed a little bit of your testimony here but I think I have a sense of what you all were saying, and just picking up on some of the comments that have been made earlier, I had an opportunity to just hear from the president of the World Bank today talking about—OECD schools that—schools including—from Finland, South Korea, that have all ranked so much higher than the U.S. in their PISA scores, which really reflects students' ability to reason, to problem solve.

And one of the factors, of course, is that in the schools that they have been looking at the barrier to getting into teaching is far higher, they are paid much better, they are highly esteemed, and that is a situation that I think we all talk about, we all want more here, and yet it seems somewhat difficult to have the level of discussion focus as much on some of those areas as what we are talking about, which is equally important.

I just wondered about your thoughts on that. As you look to models here in the United States, when you are obviously representing a number of them that are strong, where does that fit? Because the esteem for teachers and what we see sometimes as low morale really does factor in here. How important do you think that is?

Ms. GIST. I would be happy to start. Thank you.

It is incredibly important, and I think, you know, when we look at what happened in Finland, there was actually a very dramatic change in their expectations for who was entering into the profession and the way in which they were preparing them. So we, I think, are all, in our states, launching into this—in a little bit more of a gradual way—I mean, for us it feels pretty significant and I know for our programs in Rhode Island, given how much we are doing, it feels pretty significant, but when you look at what has happened in countries like Finland it really was much more dramatic there the way they tackled that.

But I think when we look at what we can learn from what they did, it certainly is raising the expectations of the quality of candidates who come into the programs in the first place. But it is also the depth of the experience that they get when they are in their preparation program. It is quite academic, a heavy focus on content.

You know, they really are professionals; they are practitioner researchers. They are learning not just to instruct but they are actually becoming professional educators, and then I think what I see as some of the biggest differences—and it definitely does change the perception of the field, which then begins to spiral upward.

Ms. SINGER-GABELLA. I would agree with all of that. And then there is also—something that will attract a more diverse and talented pool is the idea of having a career path ahead of me so that I know that I have opportunities to learn and to grow. And so we need to be able to build those into our school systems, which typically in districts really are very flat organizations and the way that one progresses is to move out of the classroom.

So we want to be able to find ways to differentiate roles for teachers to provide them with opportunities to learn and grow, and also to be compensated throughout. So in Finland when one attends a preparation program one does not forego years of income. One is supported in that process.

Ms. PESKE. I will just add quickly, we are using the accountability policies and our turnaround work as a laboratory for restructuring the career for teachers in an effort to learn from what we are doing in our turnaround schools, which are now under state receivership, in an effort to learn and better develop the profession.

I would also add, though, it is the responsibility of the educator preparation program, as far as I am concerned, to infuse a sense that this profession is the most impactful one you can enter. So oftentimes I hear preparation programs saying things like, "Yes, well we can't really do much. You know, we do some things and then they get into these schools." And to me, like, what is the point of your program if not to say that, like, you are helping to prepare these people to make impact?

And finally, I would be remiss if I didn't point out that Massachusetts is also one of the highest-performing states on the PISA results in contrast to other nations.

Mrs. DAVIS. And, Ms. Hall, if you could include as well, because the turnover—yes, I think you were addressing some issues—keeping students for at least 4 years.

Ms. HALL. Right.

Mrs. DAVIS. We still see a lot of turnover for entering teachers.

Ms. HALL. Right. We are definitely after building better teachers and also building teachers that are meant to last. It is why our model is designed with a delivery model that is longer because it requires a much deeper set of preparation.

I would echo everything that my colleagues up here said, particularly the need for a career ladder and leadership roles that keep folks in the classroom in some capacity. But I will also add to that that the role of principal—we talked about earlier—is just as important here. As a professional teacher you want to respect your boss and your peers, and not all teachers do.

Mrs. DAVIS. Yes. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman ROKITA. Thank the gentlelady. Gentlelady's time is expired.

Mr. Messer is now recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MESSER. Thank you. Sorry for not being able to be here the whole time. I was over in a Foreign Affairs Committee hearing as well.

I just want to thank you for the important work that you do. I mean, I think we all know that the number one indicator of student success will be parental involvement, but there is no question that the number two indicator of student success is a high-quality teacher.

Kids that have access to a high-quality teacher have a chance to learn; those who don't don't. And so thank you for your important work.

Obviously the stakes for society have changed a lot over the last several decades. I think one of the challenges we face in education

is that we have to do more. You know, it used to be just a few decades ago if you left school with the ability to do basic math and some reading and writing you could get a high—you know, you could get a decent job, you could build a life.

In today's world, unless you can learn to learn and be able to learn throughout your lifetimes, you are going to struggle. And so we have a higher bar that we all have to reach to get there.

I think the testimony that I have heard has been fascinating on this important issue. I want to start with Ms. Hall.

Two of the key ideas behind your program is to not equate having a master's degree with effectiveness, and having teachers prove effectiveness before they get certified. Do you think the federal requirements like "highly qualified teacher" requirements that focus on credentials are helpful, and how can more programs embrace the ideas of ensuring effectiveness before granting teacher certification?

Ms. HALL. Yes. So it is a highly complex question, obviously, that you have posed.

In our model we are designed so that all the folks in our program must demonstrate effectiveness as demonstrated in part by student achievement gains before they are fully certified. However, folks do come in and under the first 2 years of teaching they are on a provisional license.

We do support a high minimum standard, if you will, for handing out provisional licenses, and then I think it becomes the job of how—where is the concentration? Is there a disproportionate impact of where these provisional licenses sit and in which schools?

Where can we attach either professional development requirements or coaching and push in support not just for those teachers so they can move, even coming in with a high minimum requirement. We don't want to make the bar too high for teachers to get in, but once they are in we need to support the heck out of them to make sure they stay because that provides not only support for them but then also a safety net for the kids they are teaching.

And then yes, our model—what our belief is is that before earning full certification that is the point where effectiveness must be demonstrated.

Mr. MESSER. Yes.

And next question would be to Dr. Singer-Gabella and then maybe to Ms. Hall.

I actually am a Vanderbilt Law School graduate, so I know a little bit about the Peabody School, and obviously it is a fantastic place.

I have to admit to you, I was disheartened to hear these statistics that we had gone and 25 years ago the average teacher had a 15-year career to today, 1-year. My sister-in-law is actually a teacher who is 20 years into her career and seems to be going strong, so she will be moving that number up. I think it is sort of self-evident that if someone has been there a year, it creates some real challenges.

My instincts are that federal policy may not be the answer here, but I would just ask to start with you and—Ms. Hall, and then any others: What can we do as a society to try to change the attrition rate?

Ms. SINGER-GABELLA. Again, I think part of it is to create—is to ensure that teaching is a career that people want to stay in, that they can continue to learn and grow, that they see a future in. I think all of us need to convey the importance of teaching and the critical impact that teaching makes.

We have got to break away from thinking about teaching as something that happens with one teacher and 25 children in a classroom and to begin to think about it as something that spans the community, that involves relationships with one's colleagues, with one's children, with one's families, with the community organizations, and begin to think creatively about how do we work together to promote a better future for our youth.

Ms. HALL. And I will just add that I think we need to be strategic about the teachers that we are keeping. Absolutely we want folks to not go home for Thanksgiving if they are a first-year teacher and not come back, because that happens a lot and it happens in a lot of our urban schools.

But we need to create a climate—an environment that they want to be in, both with their principles and with their peers. And again, it has to—more so than money, it has a lot to do with the quality of preparation that they feel going into the classroom.

If they are not well prepared they are going to be sort of taxed and put at their worst every day because they don't know what they are doing. I think I was one of those folks in my first year as a teacher.

So a lot of it starts at the front end with better preparation, and then better opportunity and ways to stay and keep a foot in the classroom as a teacher.

Ms. PESKE. I would just add quickly to that comment that this underscores the importance of the clinical training so that folks have lots of experiences in schools, lots of time in schools, lots of time in different schools, and lots of time in schools that parallels what they end up doing when they are hired so they are not surprised by some of the challenges they will encounter.

Chairman ROKITA. Gentleman's time is expired. Thank the gentleman.

Ms. Wilson is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WILSON. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

And thanks to the panel. I have been a lifelong educator and served as a school teacher and a school principal, and it—I have a question for all of you, if I can get your perspective on how you feel about testing—high stakes testing.

It seems that the further along we get in rolling out teacher evaluation systems the more questions we have regarding value-added formulas, the impact of individual teachers on student learning, and the overuse of test scores. Yet the conventional wisdom seems to be that we need to hold teacher preparation programs accountable by looking at the test scores of the K-12 students of program graduates.

Given some of the problems with using children's test scores to evaluate K-12 teachers, do you have any concerns with extrapolating such data to teacher preparation programs?

Ms. SINGER-GABELLA. There are a couple of issues. One is that we don't—the technology just isn't there yet. If you are looking at—

we have a simultaneous problem of the fact that the impact of a preparation institution typically washes out within 3 to 5 years, and that is just about the time that the value-added estimates that are derived from students' test scores become stable enough.

So for example, we know that in Tennessee the state is relying on 1-year value-added estimates, meaning that there is 1 year of data for a new teacher that can be used. We know that you are very likely—that those estimates are extremely unstable, so that from 1 year you may be rated at the top—in the top quintile, and then the next year you may be rated in the bottom.

The second problem is that typically programs don't graduate enough people in a particular cell—so, for example, middle school English teachers—we don't graduate enough of those folks in order to have a sample size that would tell you that is a reliable estimate of what the program is doing. So I realize this is moving to become very technical, but the—given that there is great instability in the measure, that we can't really rely on that measure to be telling us that—for sure that that teacher is doing—that that is a reliable estimate for that teacher.

We can't aggregate back to programs. It becomes very difficult to be able to use those scores to tie those back to teachers—to particular programs.

Ms. GIST. I would just add, and first of all I wanted just to address the beginning part of what you said. I think we do see in some of our schools and classrooms that there is too much testing going on. I also think it would be a huge, unfortunate reaction if we began to believe that tests were bad or did not give us useful information. They certainly do.

And so the question is, how do we have a comprehensive system within our schools where our teachers are on a regular basis collecting information for their own use in the classroom and in schools, and then how do we do that at a policy level in a way that is integrated into our school days and not disruptive to learning but actually supporting learning?

I agree that there are some technical challenges with how to do this well for programs, which is why I think it is important for us to do this closer to the state and local level. We do believe in Rhode Island that it is very important to look at outcomes and at including state assessments, and so we are using it but we are proceeding with caution and working very closely with our school districts and our institutions of higher education to make sure that we are carrying it out in a thoughtful and careful way.

Ms. PESKE. We are doing something similar in Massachusetts. I do believe we need to include these student growth measures as part of a multiple measure system, which is the architecture of our educator evaluation system. It is built on multiple measures.

And so we will be including information—we don't call it value-added but we call it student growth percentiles. That will be included in program data that we give back to the programs.

Ms. HALL. And I would be remiss if I didn't address this, as well. We are a teacher preparation program that does use student achievement as part of a composite score.

We have gotten smarter about what is fair and what isn't in terms of using student achievement gains. The way we have de-

signed our program is that teachers have 3 years to build their practice as a solo teacher of record, and it is across those 3 years that we look at student achievement gain.

We look at multiple measures. We are also looking at classroom observation done by coaching. We evaluate their professionalism.

So it is no one data point, including a student achievement data point. And it is using a composite across all 3 years that creates something that is flexible enough and that can still recognize—you know, in time data tells a story. There can be a very weak signal if you don't have a lot of data and you don't have enough time, but with the safeguard of a 3-year program and of a composite measure that also heavily weighs clinical practice and observation and professionalism, in time that sends a stronger signal around the capability of teaching. That is our belief.

Chairman ROKITA. I thank the gentlelady. Gentlelady's time is expired.

Chairman Roe is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. ROE. Thanks, Chairman. I am sorry for being a little bit late. I had another engagement this morning.

And it is difficult for me, with two degrees from the University of Tennessee, to welcome a Vanderbilt, but welcome.

And I want to thank all of you all. I think you have the most important job in America, which is to educate our youth. And I started out this Monday morning—Monday at Blountville Middle School in the eighth grade speaking to their class, and I saw a great teacher. And they learned the preamble to the Constitution, and the challenge was three students stood up and said it in less than 7 seconds. It can be done.

And I could see where education in that classroom was fun. Students were having fun. It shouldn't be drudgery. You can't go through years and years of training and have it as drudgery.

And I want to debunk some myths now. I know how terrible you are, how awful a job you are doing in America, because I watch the evening news like everybody else. The problem is that is not the truth, and I wish Mrs. Davis was still here because I do want to talk about Finland and I want to talk about how Finland has 5.4 million people and a 4 percent poverty rate.

I read a book recently and I challenge everybody in this room to read this book—M. Night Shyamalan, "I Got Schooled." You need to read the book because it says this—and he went out and looked at data, like you all are doing—what are we actually accomplishing?

And he found out to close the achievement gap if you took schools in this country that had 10 percent or less poverty—and poverty is defined as 75 percent and above free and reduced lunch—and remember, 20 to 22 percent of our schools in this country meet that definition—we have the highest PISA scores in the world. No one is even close.

So when you look at this country you have to look at it in terms of where poverty is and where the real—and it is really—we are not going to ever close the achievement gap unless we help improve poverty. So it is a self-fulfilling prophecy. That was eye-opening to me, that I didn't realize how well we were doing.

And he went through four of five things that you all have talked all about, and I just want to bring them up, and I obviously can't go over the whole book now.

But, Ms. Hall, you brought it out is how you get a good teacher, because if you don't have a good—it doesn't have to be Superman or Superwoman in the classroom, just a good teacher. If you do that, how do you make sure that a teacher who is not effective is not hired? And I think what you are doing is making sure they are prepared when they get back.

And one of the chapters in his book is: Mr. Brodinsky, Report to the Office and Bring Your Suitcase. In other words, there are just some people that don't need to be teaching. So that was one thing.

Second thing was a highly effective principal, where a principal spent 80 percent of their time in the classroom helping the teacher, not making sure that they are doing wrong, but improving what they are doing, being there. And I know when I was in school the only thing I saw Mr. Thompson do as a World War II Marine was to get us out of the hallways. He was very effective at that.

And one of the most impressive things in this book to me was what he wrote about how much you lose—how much a low-income student loses in the summer in their reading. They lose as much as 2.8 months, where my children and your children are going to get read to, they are going to the library, we go to vacation Bible school, whatever you do in the summer.

During the school year when you guys have them they do just as well as any other student, so I think we need to be focusing—and one of my concerns, I think one of the reasons that the teachers are having such a tough time staying where they are is they feel like they are being bent into a pretzel with 400 things you have to send back here to Washington or whatever and check every box or I am somehow a bad teacher, and they are not bad teachers. I want our teachers out there to know in America that most of them are doing a great job; they are not doing a poor job.

How does the Common Core affect teachers in retention, job satisfaction, and so forth?

And I guess we are doing it in Tennessee so I will drop that one in your lap.

Ms. SINGER-GABELLA. Are you? First, I also have to tell you that you have a tremendous teacher preparation institution in U.T., so we—we are very good colleagues.

We are working hard to prepare our teachers, and in fact, the Common Core is very consistent in terms of the kinds of outcomes for students is very consistent with the kind of teaching and learning that we are preparing—trying to prepare our teachers to do. So obviously there are challenges. The Common Core is not written for English-learners and so there is tremendous scaffolding that is—that needs to be done, but I think it has provided a focus point for many preparation institutions around setting a high bar for learners and then thinking about, okay, how are we going to help prepare teachers to get students to those standards?

Mr. ROE. Have our teachers bought into it in Tennessee where we are using Common Core—

Ms. SINGER-GABELLA. My impression is yes, primarily they have. There are issues in implementation, and we will really know what

is going on when the assessments hit and the rubber meets the road.

Mr. ROE. Well, I see my time has expired. I really appreciate what you all are doing in education across this country. I think you have one of the most important jobs in the United States, and thank you for being here.

Chairman ROKITA. Gentleman's time has expired. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. Scott is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SCOTT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I am always intrigued with the idea that that people—that school boards need instruction from Washington to tell them that teachers ought to be certified in the subject matter that they are teaching, as if the school board is looking at a list—a group of qualified teachers and they look over them and pick somebody that is not qualified, when the reality is that you don't have anybody qualified applying for the salary that was offered.

I guess my question is, has there been an analysis as to what salary we ought to be offering teachers in order to attract the skill set that we are looking for?

Ms. PESKE. There have been various analyses of teacher salaries. However, a number of the analyses show that money is not the only thing that matters. It is certainly important and it certainly becomes more important to folks after, say, 5 years when they look around and see their other colleagues who graduated from college making much more money—

Mr. SCOTT. Well, I mean, if we were hiring doctors we could put salaries out there at \$50,000. We would find some doctors. I don't think anybody would want to go to one, but I mean, we could find some doctors.

And there has to be—what are we competing with in terms of skill set? The people with the skill sets that we are looking for, what do they make somewhere else compared to teaching?

Ms. PESKE. I mean, I can't answer that in terms of—I could speculate but I wouldn't do that. But again, I would emphasize that while money is important, a crazy principal will drive you out faster than a low salary.

Mr. SCOTT. Right. But I mean, we are talking—people are making choices all the way through the process. When they go to college, what do they major in? When they decide career choices, what choices do they make? And they look at salaries, and if there is a low salary you are not going to get the best and the brightest coming into teaching if the salaries are the worst on the lot.

So my question is, we are competing for talent. You have got to pay for the talent that you are competing for. What are people with the skill set that we are looking for—what are they making compared to teaching?

Ms. SINGER-GABELLA. First of all, I would agree that there are other factors besides salary, but my colleagues in Tennessee at the State Board of Education did an analysis to look at both starting salaries, which were not altogether necessarily too different, but then if you look 5 and 10 years out, looking at the differential in growth, so that someone, for example, who has a background in mathematics and a bachelor's degree 10 years out—and I would

have to go and get you the precise figures, but the salaries were pushing toward \$100,000, whereas for 10 years out for a teacher in our state the salary would be closer to \$45,000.

Mr. SCOTT. And what does this do to your ability to recruit the best and the brightest in mathematics?

Ms. SINGER-GABELLA. I think it makes it very challenging. Mathematics and science, where obviously the options are greatest, are the areas in which we are having the hardest time recruiting and keeping good teachers.

Ms. HALL. Pardon me. I was going to add, we are recruiting science teachers right now and we are recruiting elementary and reading teachers and English language arts teachers, and math is where we lose them. They apply to our program, they start an application, and then they go take jobs that offer \$70,000 to \$80,000 starting salaries.

Mr. SCOTT. Well, how can we reasonably expect to keep—to recruit and retain the best and the brightest if we are paying salaries half as much?

Ms. GIST. I don't think you are going to find anyone on this panel that would disagree with the importance of paying our great teachers much more than we do now. I think that is really important.

I do think that—we have talked a little bit about career ladders, and giving our teachers additional leadership opportunities and opportunities to take their expertise and share it with their colleagues, and I think doing that in a way that allows them to increase their salaries is also a very positive thing to consider.

But no disagreement about the need to make sure that our great teachers are better compensated.

Mr. SCOTT. Mr. Chairman, that is the only point I wanted to make. You know, we can talk around about how you get highly qualified teachers and train them right and this that and the other, but if you are not paying them a competitive salary for the skill set that we are looking for, you are not going to get the best and the brightest and we are going to always have the problem.

I yield back.

Chairman ROKITA. I thank the gentleman.

Dr. Foxx is recognized for 5 minutes.

Chairwoman Foxx. Thank you.

Congressman Scott, I will tell you I worked in a university and community college. I think we have it backwards with salaries in this country. I think we should be paying the people at the elementary level what we pay college professors to begin with, because the college professors have the students that have already been filtered out. Seriously, I have said this all my life.

There is one other thing which unfortunately is not very popular on your side of the aisle, and that is differential pay. We could get the people to come into math and science if we were willing to pay them what they are worth, but we have the unions and other groups of people who refuse to allow differential pay to be done.

There really are answers to it. You all sort of moved around it, but it can be done. And you are right: It is a simple thing. But thanks for bringing it up, because I think it is a really important thing.

You talked about this, and every panel we have had—this is our 13th panel—every panel we have had says we collect too much data at the federal level and we don't have information. And you all have confirmed that again. What I would like to know very quickly is do you ever get any feedback on all that data?

You are shaking your heads no. Okay. No. Okay.

So it is useless. We are just wasting a lot of people's time and money, and I wonder where it is all stored, which is also another expensive thing. So thank you for answering that.

The next question I would like to ask is you have talked about teacher preparation programs and effectiveness. Tell us how you are measuring effectiveness in your programs and in what happens after the teachers go out.

Dr. Gist?

Ms. GIST. Yes, ma'am. I would be happy to start.

We have recently adopted new standards, as I mentioned during my testimony, and the process that we are going through now is the development of our program approval process. And we are working closely with our partners in higher education as well as our partners in K-12 in the field to develop that program approval process.

And it will include everything from the ways in which we are evaluating the quality through which our preparation programs are selecting excellent applicants and aspiring teachers, the way that they prepare them, meaning that we have certain expectations for them that include making sure that aspiring teachers have strong content, but also making sure that they have experiences in the field and making sure that when they are in the field with students that they are getting regular feedback on what is happening when they are with students, so they are not just there to experience it, but when they are there they are getting—someone is giving them—observing them and giving them feedback on what is happening.

And then we are also going to be looking at outcomes. So we are going to be looking at once an aspiring teacher leaves a preparation program, what is their level of success following that?

And we are looking at it—looking at that in a number of different ways. It includes everything from the evaluation that that teacher gets in the classroom once they are there; it includes the quality of their placements; it includes a number of different elements that we have created, and that information will be available through the report card that we are developing so that it is completely transparent.

Chairwoman Foxx. Dr. Singer-Gabella?

Ms. SINGER-GABELLA. I want to point out also, I think that we need to think about this again as a continuum—as a trajectory, so that we are talking—most good programs have benchmarks throughout their preparation. They have screening points in which they are allowing candidates to move through based on their performance up to that point.

I had mentioned that before our candidate graduates we are requiring them to pass the edTPA, which is a really nice, performance-based measure. It gives us a very nice snapshot of our can-

didates' ability to plan, to assess, to think systematically about data and to provide good feedback.

Once our candidates are taking positions teaching, we really do take seriously the feedback that we get from employers and the extent to which they are staying in the field. So that feels like another important piece.

We are interested, again, in looking at other measures—for example, student perception data. And then we are paying attention to persistence in the field.

Chairwoman Foxx. Quickly. The time is almost up.

Ms. PESKE. Sure. First I would say, I don't think it is useless for us to report to you on Title II data. I think if we had few measures and they were comparable across states we would learn a great deal about what other states are doing, so I wouldn't want you to abandon that altogether.

Chairwoman Foxx. Ms. Hall?

Chairman ROKITA. Quickly, please?

Ms. HALL. Thank you.

How do we measure for effectiveness? We absolutely look to how the school principal evaluates our folks, but we also have our own measures that we look at. As I said, it is across 3 years. You have 3 years to build your practice to make sure it is—there is a consistency in the data that we are looking at. It includes eight to 10 clinical observations by one of our coaches that is observing clinical practice as an input, but a very important input.

We look at professionalism. Are they a productive member of the community? Do they take locus of control? Do they take responsibility for what they are doing and not—or are they kid-blaming?

And then last, we do use pre-and post-test data.

Chairwoman Foxx. Thank you.

Chairman ROKITA. Thank the gentlelady.

Recognize myself for 5 minutes.

Picking up on where Dr. Foxx left off, I would like to give Dr. Peske a couple seconds to see if she would indicate what data elements she would keep.

And you don't have to say now, but would you be willing to put that in the record or even write me a private letter?

Ms. PESKE. Certainly. I would be willing to put it in the record and/or write you a private letter.

Chairman ROKITA. Okay.

And how about the other three of you? Would you be willing to say what elements you would like to keep?

Now, of course you are—is that a yes?

Let that record indicate all the witnesses have agreed to do such.

Now, if you remember back to Brett Guthrie's questions, he said, well, it is kind of—what I just asked you to do is a little bit unfair if you don't know why you are being asked about all the data elements. You know, maybe you could provide better data if you know what was being done and why you were being asked for it.

Have you had any correspondence, have you had any interaction with the Department of Education or anyone else as to why they are asking what they are asking?

Dr. Gist?

Ms. GIST. Well first of all, I think that the U.S. Department of Education has indicated an interest and a willingness to explore this and to figure out how we can do a better job. I don't think they have an interest in, the leadership doesn't have an interest in perpetuating these reporting structures.

Chairman ROKITA. What human would?

Ms. GIST. But I will also say—

Chairman ROKITA. Right.

Ms. GIST.—that Title II is not the only area where that happens. IDEA is another example of where there is a lot of data collected that isn't necessarily improving performance.

Chairman ROKITA. Have they gone down that road? What are we doing? What can you point to for trying to make this better?

Ms. GIST. I mean, in the two examples that I have given I don't think it has been—I mean, I think that the status quo remains in those two examples.

Chairman ROKITA. Thank you.

Anyone else want to chime in on that?

Ms. Hall? It is okay if you don't.

Ms. HALL. I think I would like to answer from a practitioner perspective of what we look at. The data points that we look at that we think are important are when a teacher leaves. So retention and attrition are very important, but even more important is when during the school year does it happen, because that is going to inform our savviest districts of which pipelines are the best for them to pull their folks from, and we think it is a very important indicator.

Chairman ROKITA. Anyone else?

Ms. SINGER-GABELLA. Yes. I do think you want to ask the question about what data are comparable across states, and that is a really important point, and can we draw on that, and what are more appropriately gathered at the state level? These questions of how are certainly things that states, working with professional associations and institutions, can get into the weeds to really make sense of what is going on.

Chairman ROKITA. Thank you.

Differential pay—I would like your comments on the record.

Dr. Gist?

We will go right down the line. Yes, no, maybe so.

Ms. GIST. Yes, and the question is how and under what circumstances. Certainly we need to pay physics teachers and others much more in order to have them and to be able to have a pool to select from. And I also believe that when done appropriately that performance should play a role, as well.

Chairman ROKITA. What would be inappropriate? When done appropriately performance—

Ms. GIST. I think making blanket decisions about—the tools need to be quality. It needs to be thoughtful and, you know—

Chairman ROKITA. Data-driven. Evidence—

Ms. GIST. Quality and multiple measures, not just one set of data.

Chairman ROKITA. Someone has got to do a review, and that—

Ms. GIST. Pardon?

Chairman ROKITA. Someone has to do a review. That review has to be common across employees, that kind of thing?

Ms. GIST. Right. And quality. Consistent—

Chairman ROKITA. Quality.

Ms. GIST. Right. So in other words, the tool that you are using needs to be looking for the right things and it needs to be implemented well.

Chairman ROKITA. Do you have an example?

Ms. GIST. We have just launched into a major effort to put new evaluation systems into place and we worked very carefully to look at the research and develop observation guides for evaluators, principals, and others who are going into classrooms, and so their tool has to be good, but also they have to be trained really well and prepared to be able to use the tool effectively.

Chairman ROKITA. Dr. Singer?

Ms. SINGER-GABELLA. I would agree that the how is really where we get into trouble, and we wouldn't want to underpay the folks who are working at the primary level on critical language development. So it is sort of figuring out, how do we balance—

Chairman ROKITA. Well, if they are bad—

Ms. SINGER-GABELLA. Oh, yes, absolutely. I think no one disagrees that we want to make sure that people are accountable for strong performance.

Chairman ROKITA. Thank you.

Ms. PESKE. Yes, sir, we need differential pay for differential roles, for differential subjects, for teaching in various shortage areas, particularly our low-income and low-performing schools.

Chairman ROKITA. Thank you.

Ms. Hall?

Ms. HALL. I wholeheartedly agree. The way we think of it at UTC is like the operating room. There are probably 10 to 12 to 15 different jobs and levels of expertise that are all evaluated and paid differently in those operating rooms, and we think our schools should be the same.

Chairman ROKITA. Thank you all.

I will yield back and now recognize Mr. Polis.

Mr. POLIS. Thank you.

Before I get to my closing I want to address differential pay for a moment. There are many school districts across the country that have implemented generally increased pay for STEM professionals.

We had a statewide program in Colorado for several years, increased pay—I believe it was \$3,000 supplementary income for math and science teachers, hard-to-recruit areas. It was a very popular program. It had to be defunded in the Great Recession, as a lot of states had to cut their education expenditures.

Certainly I would have interest, and if there are any of my colleagues across the aisle that would, in a federal pilot program to support teachers and supplement salaries in STEM fields, particularly in areas that it is hard to recruit teachers that serve impoverished kids. That could be a very high-leverage way to use our limited federal dollars to help ensure that particularly STEM's teachers are able to work and support their families in very challenging work environments. So I think that is an area where hopefully initiatives will continue to move forward at the local level.

Again, the state level, we did have a program in Colorado, and I think had the resources been there we probably still would and it would be something to look into—to federally, as well.

I want to thank our witnesses for their testimony and for sharing some really terrific expertise on how school districts, states, and the federal government and as well as teacher training institutions can work together to better prepare teachers so they can thrive in the classroom.

I want to address the professional development piece. The teacher preparation piece, of course, absolutely critical and we are talking about actually looking at output-based indicators. We have had a similar issue with regard to professional development.

The teacher entering the classroom after preparation is in no way, shape, or form as fully developed as they will be over time with professional development. Districts, the federal government, states all invest in professional development.

How do we also see, or do you have any examples of how this revolution in data-and outcome-based measurements can also influence the effectiveness of teacher preparation programs to improve the quality of teachers in the classroom?

Who would like to address that?

Dr. Gist?

Ms. GIST. Sure. I think one of the exciting things that has happened in our roll-out of our new educator evaluation systems is the connection between that work and professional development.

We have for too long in our profession had these blanket, you know, everybody go to a certain building and everyone gets the same professional development. It may or may not be something that you need and/or are interested in.

And so, just like we differentiate instruction in our classrooms for our students, we need to make sure that our professional educators have access to professional development and opportunities to grow and learn in areas in which they want to grow and learn and have been identified as areas in which they need to grow.

Mr. POLIS. And I think for too long decisions have been made based on, you know, who has the slickest marketing, or what was trendy at the time. And if we can move to a more data-based way of making sure districts make data-based decisions that can improve the quality of teaching.

Dr. Peske, did you want to address—

Ms. PESKE. Yes, quickly. We also need to rely on our effective educators. So now that we have these educator evaluation systems in place with strong data we need to identify those educators who are exemplary with data and we need to learn from them. So rather than bring in all these vendors to give us professional development, we need to turn to the teachers who are doing this the best.

Mr. POLIS. I look forward to soon introducing the Great Teachers Leading for Great Schools Act, which will revamp Title II of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act to focus on intensive job-embedded professional development with transparency and outcome-based indicators.

Really, learning starts with our preparation systems—both initial preparation as well as professional development. Teachers need pre-service opportunities to explore new strategies, the opportuni-

ties to work together sharing teaching strategies, engaging in meaningful and continuous professional work and development as they proceed through their careers.

Innovation is occurring, as we heard from examples like the Urban Teacher Center and states like Massachusetts and Rhode Island, which are putting in place policies that ensure that teachers, districts, and the public have information about how to improve schools. We need to give social entrepreneurs and innovators the ability to innovate in this important field and ensure that our traditional programs are held accountable and focus on outputs that actually improve the quality of education that our next generation of students receive.

I look forward to working with my colleagues to advance policies that invest in our nation's educators to build a strong teacher preparation system. I think this hearing is a very good first start and look forward to working on legislation regarding some of the ideas that our experts presented in testimony today.

And I yield back the balance of my time.

Chairman ROKITA. I thank the gentleman.

And for the record, I would like to say that I would be interested in learning more of the gentleman's policies and language with the idea of partnering with him on different subjects. I appreciate the offer.

I would like to thank the witnesses again for coming. It was very enlightening. I learned a lot. There is a method to my madness about offering to go last—my questioning, and that is I could listen more and I appreciate that.

In the request I made of you during my 5 minutes of questioning that you are going to respond to, the specific request was to list those data elements that you thought were good to keep in—effective to keep in, but there is a corollary, perhaps, to that, and that is list for me elements that aren't being collected that ought to be, in your opinion. That is just as valuable.

And again, Mr. Guthrie has brought that up in his questioning but I am not sure for the record that we got really precise answers or recommendations from you. And I only task you with this because I think, frankly, your opinion is going to be—is going to weigh heavily for a lot of us, so I would encourage you to, in fact, respond.

With that, again, I would like to thank the witnesses for the testimony as we continue to work through reauthorizations of the Higher Education Act and of the Student Success Act.

And finding no further business before the committees, these subcommittees stand adjourned.

[Additional Submissions by Mr. Davis follow:]

Written Statement

**On behalf of the
American Psychological Association**

At a Joint Subcommittee Hearing

"Exploring Efforts to Strengthen the Teaching Profession"

**U.S. House of Representatives Early Childhood, Elementary and Secondary
Education Subcommittee and Higher Education and Workforce Training
Subcommittee**

February 27, 2014

Chairman Rokita, Chairwoman Foxx, Ranking Member McCarthy, Ranking Member Hinojosa, Representative Davis and other members of the Subcommittees on Early Childhood, Elementary and Secondary Education and Higher Education and Workforce Training, thank you for your recent hearing, “Exploring Efforts to Strengthen the Teaching Profession.”

The American Psychological Association (APA) is the largest scientific and professional organization representing psychology in the United States. APA is the world's largest association of psychologists, with more than 134,000 researchers, educators, clinicians, consultants and students as its members. Our mission is to advance the creation, communication and application of psychological knowledge to benefit society and improve people's lives.

APA appreciates your attention to many of the critical issues facing the field of teacher preparation today. We applaud your focus on the importance of teaching in general and your consideration of the ways in which the federal government can and should help to strengthen the teaching profession.

APA would like to bring your attention to a recently released report entitled, “Assessing and Evaluating Teacher Preparation Programs.” Authored by APA members with deep understanding and experience in both assessment and teacher preparation, this document is designed to help institutional leaders, educational leaders, organizations and policy makers better understand ways to use available data for real and effective program improvement and accountability. This report assumes that the kinds of data and methods required to evaluate the effectiveness of teacher education programs ought to be informed by well-established scientific methods that have evolved in the science of psychology. Finally, the report includes short-term and long-term recommendations that are intended to lead to the best use of data for program improvement and accountability.

We have included the executive summary of this report as part of this testimony. We hope that this report will serve as a resource for members of both subcommittees in their effort to reauthorize Title II of the Higher Education Act and to give teacher preparation programs the tools and support to improve. The stakes are high and the future success of our nation depends on the success of our K-12 students today – and so much of that success rests with their teachers and how they are prepared.

We thank you for this opportunity to include this testimony as part of the hearing record. We look forward to working with the members of both subcommittees in the months ahead. If you have any questions or need more information, please contact Jenny Smulson, Senior Legislative and Federal Affairs Officer, in APA's Education Government Relations Office at 202-336-5945 or via email at jmulson@apa.org.

Assessing and Evaluating Teacher Preparation Programs ***Executive Summary***

Effective teaching has always been important and, in recent years, the effectiveness of programs to produce high quality teachers has become an issue of national concern. One fortunate outcome of this renewed focus on teacher education programs is the attention being paid to the creation of valid and efficient tools to assess that teaching force and teacher preparation. Recent scholarship has highlighted three methods—value-added models of student achievement, standardized observation protocols, and surveys of performance—that can be used by teacher education programs to demonstrate that the candidates who complete their programs are well prepared to support student learning. The desire for evidence of program impact arises primarily from the acknowledged ethical and professional responsibility of teacher education programs to assure the public that they are preparing effective teachers for U.S. schools. This report assumes that the kinds of data and methods required to evaluate the

effectiveness of teacher education programs ought to be informed by well-established scientific methods that have evolved in the science of psychology, which at its core addresses the measurement of behavior.

Guiding Principles of the Report

- PreK-12 student learning is the central element of effective teaching and should be an ongoing part of teacher preparation, with implications for quality control, program improvement, and program fidelity-assurance.
- Validity is the most important characteristic of any assessment, and is the foundation for judging technical quality. Validity is a comprehensive concept, encompassing other critical concepts such as reliability, intended and unintended consequences of the assessment, and fairness. Irrelevant variation introduced by differences in such things as assessment directions, observer training and biases, assessment locale, and a host of other factors will degrade the validity of the assessment system and the quality of decisions made on the basis of the data. Using multiple sources of data will result in better quality data for making valid inferences.
- Alignment of all of the elements of a program improvement effort is essential to determining what data to use, how good the data are, and what should and could be done with the data. Such alignment requires collaboration among teacher preparation programs, districts, and states. The design of explicit feedback loops from the data into program improvement activities is an important requirement of a good assessment process.
- Pursuit of some of the recommendations in this report would need to be phased in, because they involve considerable change for some programs, states, jurisdictions, and accrediting bodies. Professional associations, states, and accrediting bodies can aid in the transitions by providing training for institutions and individuals that will permit programs to acquire the capacity to make the needed changes in a timely manner.
- Faculty and administrators, state policy makers, and accrediting bodies must all make decisions about the merits of programs. These decisions should be made with the best evidence that can be obtained now, rather than the evidence we might like to have had, or that might be available in the future. Thus, we argue that we should not let the perfect be the enemy of the good. Decisions about program effectiveness need to be made using the most trustworthy data and methods currently available.

Recommendations

Some of these recommendations can be implemented in the short term, whereas others will require a longer time frame to bring to full fruition. Teacher preparation programs can begin immediately to partner with schools, districts, and state education departments to develop plans for implementing these recommendations leading to the best use of data for program improvement and accountability.

1. The Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) and local, state, and federal governments should require that teacher preparation programs have strong affirmative, empirical evidence of the positive impact of their graduates on preK-12 student learning.
2. States should work with teacher preparation program providers to design systems of data collection that include information collected at the stages of selection, progression, program completion, and post-completion.
3. States and teacher preparation programs should track candidates' involvement in various preparation experiences, and identify models of various program elements or candidate attributes that predict a positive contribution to preK-12 student learning.
4. States should work with teacher preparation programs to develop valid measures of student learning outcomes for all school subjects and grades to assess student learning outcomes similar to those that are currently available in mathematics, language arts, and science.
5. Teacher preparation programs, universities, not-for-profit organizations, school districts, states, and the federal government should dedicate appropriate resources for data collection and analysis.

6. Institutions and programs that prepare teachers should identify and retain staff with sufficient technical skills, time, and resources to conduct data analyses. They should partner with states and districts in this endeavor.
7. Institutions and programs that prepare teachers should commit to a system of continuous improvement based on examination of data about their programs.
8. Institutions that prepare teachers should train program faculty and supervising teachers in the use of well-validated observational systems and develop a system for regular “reliability” checks so that the observations continue to be conducted with a high degree of fidelity.
9. Federal agencies, state departments of education, research organizations, and teacher accreditation bodies should identify, develop, and validate student surveys that predict student achievement.
10. States, program faculty, and CAEP should continue to develop and validate developmental benchmarks and multiple metrics to be used by teacher preparation programs for graduation decisions to ensure that graduates are proficient teachers who make substantial impacts on student learning.
11. Teacher preparation faculty should develop curricula that prepare teacher candidates in the use of data such as student achievement scores, surveys, and observations so that candidates can continue to self-assess, and faculty can assess the progress of their students.
12. CAEP and the States should report annually to the public any adverse impact of implementation of assessments on the teaching force or preK-12 learning.
13. States and CAEP should develop a timeframe for implementing the recommendations made here.

[Additional Submissions by Mr. Hinojosa follow:]



**Written Testimony to the House Education & Workforce Committee:
Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Education
and the Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Training**

**“Exploring Efforts to Strengthen the Teaching Profession”
Feb. 27, 2014**

The Association of Texas Professional Educators (ATPE) is the preeminent educator association in Texas and makes a positive difference in the lives of educators and schoolchildren. ATPE is a member-owned, member-governed professional association with more than 100,000 members, making it the leading educator association in Texas and the largest independent association for public school educators in the nation. We appreciate this opportunity to share our input in response to your recent hearing entitled “Exploring Efforts to Strengthen the Teaching Profession.”

Teacher quality and effectiveness has been a cornerstone of ATPE’s advocacy program from our earliest days, and we have submitted comments to the Committee on related topics in the past. We have actively sought out data to identify our state’s greatest needs in this area and have worked to develop policy recommendations to improve the quality of teaching in our schools. Our efforts have included commissioning research on measures of teacher quality, how teacher quality relates to student achievement and school improvement and how teacher quality is distributed throughout our state.¹

Considering that high-quality teachers can positively affect student achievement and that teacher quality is not equitably distributed in our schools despite the ESEA mandate, it is crucial that policymakers at the state and national levels undertake a close examination of factors related to teacher quality. **ATPE offers these policy recommendations, which we believe would improve the teaching profession:**

- First, **mentoring** should be prioritized, as it has been proven to be one of the most efficient mechanisms to increase the effectiveness of beginning teachers in a way that translates to improvements in student achievement data and teacher retention rates. In Texas, it has been estimated that half of our teachers leave the profession within their first five years of teaching, and teacher turnover costs the state half a billion dollars each year. ATPE has advocated for a comprehensive, state-funded mentoring program that would be mandatory for new teachers in Texas. Although some LEAs in Texas have mentoring programs, there is no state statutory requirement for all new teachers to be mentored.

¹ Read more about our research at www.atpe.org/Advocacy/Issues/teacherqualitystudy.asp.

ATPE hopes that the federal government will prioritize resources to help states implement comprehensive mentoring programs, which can produce long-term savings following a minimal upfront investment. The need is even more critical in struggling schools, where mentoring would help improve the distribution of teacher quality across high-poverty, high-minority and low-performing schools. To be most effective, mentoring programs should set limits on the workload of mentors and provide them with training and a portable mentor certification. Policymakers should consider creating more specialized mentor training and certification standards for teachers of special populations, such as students with disabilities or with limited English proficiency. Educator preparation programs should share in the responsibility for mentoring. Novice teachers should observe classes taught by their mentors and share planning time with them. Mentors should receive stipends and earn continuing professional education credits. LEAs should be awarded funding to offset the costs of providing release time and schedule accommodations for novice teachers and their mentors. Funds should be allocated for evaluation of any taxpayer-funded mentoring program, including longitudinal studies of participating teachers to examine their retention rates and the growth in the achievement of students they taught. Evaluations should include surveys of teachers who receive mentoring, teachers who serve as mentors, and administrators in the schools employing those teachers and mentors. Program evaluations should also offer recommendations for expansion and sustaining long-term funding.

- Measuring teacher performance is an important topic, but **evaluation is merely one element in the broad spectrum of teaching**. ATPE supports evaluation systems that will help identify teachers who are struggling and that will provide timely, meaningful feedback to all teachers.² To be truly useful, though, evaluation systems must work in conjunction with other comprehensive initiatives to recruit and retain high-quality teachers. These include rigorous educator preparation and certification standards; mentoring and induction of novice teachers; ongoing professional development and support of teachers; and stable, competitive compensation and benefits, including retirement benefits. As in other states, Texas has faced pressure from proponents of value-added modeling (VAM), most recently as a piece of the Obama Administration's waiver process, to create a state-endorsed method of measuring student growth from one school year to the next using standardized test scores and performance targets and to incorporate such methodology into a new evaluation system. Texas has experimented with VAM models in the past, but such experiments have failed as effective tools for measuring teachers. Influenced by a number of recent, reputable studies, ATPE is highly skeptical of the ability of VAM to isolate and estimate the effects of teachers, when there are so many outside influences from non-educational factors that cannot be controlled by teachers, as well as limitations to standardized testing and access to sufficient longitudinal data. Furthermore, we know that approximately 70 percent of our teachers teach a subject or grade level that is not tested through state standardized tests. This makes the use of VAM for employment-related decisions inherently unfair.

² Also important is the evaluation of administrators; ATPE supports the creation of evaluation standards that include a survey of campus teachers and staff members regarding the professional performance of campus administrators.

- Teacher characteristics and qualifications are useful **measures of teacher quality** that should no longer be ignored. Critics argue that effectiveness must be measured exclusively through outcomes rather than through inputs. We disagree. Although it's difficult to come up with a simple definition of what constitutes an effective teacher, ATPE has learned through our research that there is a positive association between measures of teacher quality and student achievement on state standardized tests, and that certain characteristics of high-quality teachers translate to higher levels of student achievement. Our studies revealed that teacher quality, measured by factors such as experience level, was much lower in high-poverty, high-minority and low-performing schools and also lower in the areas of math and science. ATPE's research also supported many experts' belief that beginning and novice teachers (those with fewer than three years of experience) are substantially less effective than teachers with more experience. In our most recent study, the researcher developed an index that could be used to measure the quality of the educator workforce at each school using factors such as the teachers' experience level, the quality of the preparation and training they had received, and whether they were teaching the subjects they were trained to teach or being assigned outside their field. Not surprisingly, our poorest schools and those with the highest minority populations scored much lower on teacher quality indexes than their wealthier, low-minority counterparts. This is not to suggest that educators in schools with a lower score on a teacher quality index are bad educators. Primarily, they are inexperienced and might not have been trained for the assignments they've been given. Schools with the highest need and students who are struggling to keep up or catch up with their peers need the most experienced teachers to help them move forward, but the opposite usually occurs, as schools tend to assign brand-new teachers to some of the most challenging classrooms. That tendency, coupled with high teacher turnover, keeps low-performing schools at the lower end of the teacher quality index. Retention of experienced teachers and principals at a school over several years promotes growth in student achievement. Regrettably, our accountability systems are not designed to foster longevity, and we end up with a revolving door at schools with the highest numbers of poor and minority students. ATPE believes we must correct our course on accountability by paying as much attention to the characteristics of our teaching workforce as we do to the results they produce.
- Educator preparation and certification standards** must be adopted at the state level to ensure that teachers are appropriately trained to handle the rigors of the classroom and provide a quality education for their students while also helping to reduce costly teacher turnover. Teachers who have completed the training that leads to certification are more effective than those who have not. High standards help ensure that prospective teachers acquire the background knowledge required to be successful in the classroom. This includes both knowledge of the subject matter to be taught and how to teach that content to a wide range of learners, along with the ability to manage a classroom, design and implement instruction, and work skillfully with students, parents and other professionals. The same standards should be applicable to charter school teachers, which is not currently the case in Texas. State and federal policymakers should consider offering financial incentives to entice educator preparation programs to produce teachers who can fill shortage areas and reward those programs that succeed.

- Additionally, **states and LEAs should be held accountable for their teacher quality**. Specifically, they should be required to assign fully certified educators to teach within their certification areas. ATPE has urged lawmakers to incorporate teacher quality measures into our accountability systems in such a way that would not penalize schools that are struggling but instead highlight their needs and funnel resources to assist them. Our goal is to require schools to work toward an educator quality target that consists of fully certified teachers being assigned to teach the subjects in which they are certified with a high level of teacher retention. An educator quality assessment should be structured in a manner that measures both absolute compliance and progress toward compliance, with a requirement that LEAs out of compliance submit an educator quality improvement plan. Such improvement plans would allow the state to analyze the reasons for out-of-field assignments and direct resources where they are needed to address those situations. For instance, if a district had teaching vacancies because its compensation range was not competitive with neighboring districts, the state could work with that district to secure additional incentive funds to boost compensation or offer signing bonuses to attract the teachers needed for those positions. Such interventions might also include the assignment of technical assistance teams to help an LEA improve the quality of its workforce. An educator quality assessment could also be used to examine other factors, such as the duration of the principal's employment at a campus. ATPE has also advocated for annual reporting on the distribution of teacher quality, which can be a valuable tool in improving the teaching profession but has been largely ignored.
- ATPE supports initiatives to encourage **more selective recruitment of educators**. All educator preparation programs—whether based in traditional university settings or provided through alternative means—must be held to minimum standards for admission, such as GPA requirements and proof of content knowledge. Perhaps as important as compensation, making the education profession more selective would raise the prestige of teaching and entice more of our most talented youth to pursue education as a career. Unfortunately, Texas is not a role model for the nation in this area. Our admission standards fall well below national averages and beneath the thresholds recommended by researchers.
- Long-term **compensation** plans should provide predictable and meaningful salary increases that encourage our best and brightest to enter the education profession and then remain in the field. ATPE has worked to maintain a state minimum salary schedule to help Texas teachers earn wages that are competitive with teacher salaries in other states and pay in other professions for which the educators would be qualified. In addition to minimum salaries, ATPE supports differentiated pay for educators who undertake advanced training, advanced coursework or degrees, or other professional duties outside their normal instructional activities. We generally support incentive pay plans except when student test scores are used as the determining factor for a teacher's compensation. We believe incentive pay programs must be designed in an equitable and fair manner as determined by local educators on a campus basis. They should be used to encourage highly qualified teachers and administrators to go to work in hard-to-staff schools; reward teachers who take on campus leadership roles or model best practices to foster parental involvement; reduce class sizes or student-teacher ratios; and assist campuses facing sanctions under state or federal accountability systems.

- Policymakers must also take a closer look at **working conditions** in our nation's schools because they have a major impact on educator effectiveness and retention. ATPE believes state and/or national surveys would be fruitful and has advocated for these to be funded and undertaken.
- Finally, ATPE supports incentives for quality **professional development** programs for all school personnel. Such programs should be easily accessible and available to teachers at no cost. Our members consistently tell us that they want and need professional development covering a broad range of topics, such as utilizing technology; understanding education laws; individualizing instruction and educating special populations (especially students with disabilities who are increasingly mainstreamed and taught by educators not specifically certified in special education); improving classroom discipline; ensuring school safety; and promoting cultural awareness. We also support flexibility. Texas teachers are required to complete a minimum number of continuing education hours for renewal of their teaching certificates. There have been proposals to limit teachers' flexibility in choosing how to fulfill this requirement, such as requiring teachers to select only continuing education courses that are directly linked to the subject they currently teach. Although we recognize the need for educators to use professional development opportunities as a tool for improving the skills critical to their current job assignments, ATPE believes this type of limitation would have the unintended consequence of discouraging teachers from pursuing additional certifications or taking courses to become "Highly Qualified" in additional subjects. For example, a social studies teacher might be disinclined to work toward becoming a math teacher if she were unable to count her math coursework toward the continuing education requirements.

We appreciate this opportunity to share our input on strengthening the teaching profession. For additional information, please contact ATPE Governmental Relations at (800) 777-2873 or government@atpe.org.

[Questions submitted for the record and their responses follow:]

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March 25, 2014

Dr. Deborah A. Gist
 Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
 Shepard Building
 255 Westminster Street
 Providence, RI 02903-3400

Dear Dr. Gist:

Thank you for testifying at the February 27, 2014 hearing on "*Exploring Efforts to Strengthen the Teaching Profession*." We appreciate your participation.

Enclosed are additional questions submitted by members of the subcommittees after the hearing. Please provide written responses no later than April 15, 2014 for inclusion in the final hearing record. Responses should be sent to Lindsay Fryer or Dan Shorts of the committee staff who can be contacted at (202) 225-6558.

Thank you, again, for your important contribution to the work of the committee.

Sincerely,

Todd Rokita
 Chairman
 Subcommittee on Early Childhood,
 Elementary, and Secondary Education

Virginia Foxx
 Chairwoman
 Subcommittee on Higher Education
 and Workforce Training

Chairman Todd Rokita (R-IN)

1. We've heard that states rarely close down poor- or low-performing teacher preparation programs. Why is it so hard to close low-performing programs that are not adequately preparing teachers?
2. States and institutions operating teacher preparation programs and participating in federal student aid programs are required by Title II of the *Higher Education Act (HEA)* to publicly report on the quality of teacher preparation programs. Beyond statute, the department added a significant number of reporting requirements on the templates it designed for Title II reporting purposes. For example, states must currently consider and enter data in up to 440 reporting fields, and institutions must complete 250 reporting fields on the templates. Current reporting requirements have been criticized for being burdensome and focusing on input measures with little to no relation to teacher effectiveness. As a result, I have the following questions:
 - We hear a lot about the high level of burden on institutions created by the current reporting requirements. Can you provide specific information on the impact these requirements have had on your program?
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March 25, 2014

Ms. Christina Hall
Co-Founder & Co-Director
Urban Teacher Center
1500 Union Ave, Suite 2200
Baltimore, MD 21211

Dear Ms. Hall:

Thank you for testifying at the February 27, 2014 hearing on "*Exploring Efforts to Strengthen the Teaching Profession*." We appreciate your participation.

Enclosed are additional questions submitted by members of the subcommittees after the hearing. Please provide written responses no later than April 15, 2014 for inclusion in the final hearing record. Responses should be sent to Lindsay Fryer or Dan Shorts of the committee staff who can be contacted at (202) 225-6558.

Thank you, again, for your important contribution to the work of the committee.

Sincerely,

Todd Rokita
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Subcommittee on Early Childhood,
Elementary, and Secondary Education

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Chairwoman
Subcommittee on Higher Education
and Workforce Training

Chairman Todd Rokita (R-IN)

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March 25, 2014

Dr. Heather G. Peske
Associate Commissioner for Educator Quality
Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
75 Pleasant Street
Malden, MA 02148-4906

Dear Dr. Peske:

Thank you for testifying at the February 27, 2014 hearing on "*Exploring Efforts to Strengthen the Teaching Profession*." We appreciate your participation.

Enclosed are additional questions submitted by members of the subcommittees after the hearing. Please provide written responses no later than April 15, 2014 for inclusion in the final hearing record. Responses should be sent to Lindsay Fryer or Dan Shorts of the committee staff who can be contacted at (202) 225-6558.

Thank you, again, for your important contribution to the work of the committee.

Sincerely,

Todd Rokita
Chairman
Subcommittee on Early Childhood,
Elementary, and Secondary Education

Virginia Foxx
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Subcommittee on Higher Education
and Workforce Training

Chairman Todd Rokita (R-IN)

1. States and institutions operating teacher preparation programs and participating in federal student aid programs are required by Title II of the *Higher Education Act (HEA)* to publicly report on the quality of teacher preparation programs. Beyond statute, the department added a significant number of reporting requirements on the templates it designed for Title II reporting purposes. For example, states must currently consider and enter data in up to 440 reporting fields, and institutions must complete 250 reporting fields on the templates. Current reporting requirements have been criticized for being burdensome and focusing on input measures with little to no relation to teacher effectiveness. As a result, I have the following questions:
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 MARK POGAN, WISCONSIN

March 25, 2014

Dr. Marcy Singer-Gabella
 Vanderbilt University
 Box 230 Peabody College
 Vanderbilt University
 Nashville, TN 37203

Dear Dr. Singer-Gabella:

Thank you for testifying at the February 27, 2014 hearing on "*Exploring Efforts to Strengthen the Teaching Profession*." We appreciate your participation.

Enclosed are additional questions submitted by members of the subcommittees after the hearing. Please provide written responses no later than April 15, 2014 for inclusion in the final hearing record. Responses should be sent to Lindsay Fryer or Dan Shorts of the committee staff who can be contacted at (202) 225-6558.

Thank you, again, for your important contribution to the work of the committee.

Sincerely,

Todd Rokita
 Chairman
 Subcommittee on Early Childhood,
 Elementary, and Secondary Education

Virginia Foxx
 Virginia Foxx
 Chairwoman
 Subcommittee on Higher Education
 and Workforce Training

Chairman Todd Rokita (R-IN)

1. Dr. Gist, we've heard that states rarely close down poor- or low-performing teacher preparation programs. In your testimony, you state that only two programs in Rhode Island have had their program approval rescinded in the last decade. Does that mean the rest were high-performing? Should there be a middle ground for those that are not high-performing, but improving? Why is it so hard to close low-performing programs that are not adequately preparing teachers?

2. States and institutions operating teacher preparation programs and participating in federal student aid programs are required by Title II of the *Higher Education Act (HEA)* to publicly report on the quality of teacher preparation programs. Beyond statute, the department added a significant number of reporting requirements on the templates it designed for Title II reporting purposes. For example, states must currently consider and enter data in up to 440 reporting fields, and institutions must complete 250 reporting fields on the templates. Current reporting requirements have been criticized for being burdensome and focusing on input measures with little to no relation to teacher effectiveness. As a result, I have the following questions:
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State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
 Shepard Building
 255 Westminster Street
 Providence, Rhode Island 02903-3400

Deborah A. Gist
 Commissioner

April 15, 2014

The Honorable Todd Rokita, Chairman, Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Education

The Honorable Virginia Foxx, Chair, Subcommittee on Higher Education
 House Committee on Education & the Workforce
 2257 Rayburn House Office Building
 Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Rokita and Chair Foxx:

Thank you for your interest in my views on the reauthorization of the teacher-preparation provisions of the Higher Education Act. I was pleased to testify, on February 27, 2014, before the joint subcommittee hearing, "Exploring Efforts to Strengthen the Teaching Profession," and, for the hearing record, I am glad to provide you with the following responses to your questions.

Question 1: Why is it so hard for states to close underperforming programs?

States have been hesitant to close underperforming teacher-preparation programs in part because states often lack adequate metrics to appropriately evaluate how effectively programs prepare teachers to deliver high-quality instruction that leads to improved student outcomes. In large part, states lack these metrics because the methodologies for establishing a causal link between the preparation programs and the effectiveness of teaching (particularly if measured based at least in part on student growth and achievement) are complicated and the data systems that we need to track performance can be cumbersome to administer.

Many states, including Rhode Island, are currently working to improve teacher-preparation programs, but the current Higher Education Act requirements strain our capacity to implement consistent, evidence-based measures of program quality.

Further, it is often hard for states to close underperforming teacher-preparation programs because of the structure of the various state educational systems. In most cases, state educational agencies do not exercise direct authority over state higher education systems. Additionally, local school districts, which are seeking high-quality teacher-preparation program graduates, are often powerless to demand improved teacher-preparation program outcomes.

Most state educational agencies do, however, have the authority to collect data, to impose state licensure requirements, and to approve teacher-preparation programs. Along with many other chief state school officers (including those working with the Council of Chief State School Officers Network for Transforming Educator Preparation), we are moving to leverage our authority regarding program approval. Rhode Island recently implemented new educator-preparation program standards and program-approval requirements that enable us to use our authority to better identify underperforming programs, to help these programs improve, and, if necessary, to close them.

Our new program-approval standards, which the Rhode Island Board of Education approved last November, require, among other principles, that:

- candidates for certification must be able to use data from multiple sources (for example, research, student work) to guide their classroom instruction and professional practices;
- approved programs must form partnerships with the schools and districts where they place students for clinical practice, and they must evaluate the effectiveness of these partnerships;
- approved programs must “recruit, admit, and support high-quality candidates who reflect the diversity” of students in Rhode Island public schools;
- approved programs must have criteria for determining that students are proficient in their certification area before recommending these students as candidates for certification;
- approved programs must “produce effective educators,” as evidenced by the performance of their graduates on educator evaluations once they are working in schools; and
- approved programs must “publicly report and widely share” aggregate information about their students and their graduates, including the employment status and data on student growth regarding their graduates.

For further information on the Rhode Island standards, see:

http://www.ride.ri.gov/Portals/0/Uploads/Documents/Teachers-and-Administrators-Excellent-Educators/Educator-Certification/Becoming-an-Educator/RIPA_Standards_2013.pdf.

and

http://media.ride.ri.gov/BOE/Enclosures/Enclosures_11_13_13/Encl8b_Educator_Preparation_Program_Standards.pdf

A reauthorized Higher Education Act that reduces unnecessary administrative burdens and promotes a state-level focus on fewer but higher-quality indicators would strengthen state authority and preserve state capacity to foster continuous improvement in preparation-program outcomes, to identify underperforming programs, and to close programs that are not producing graduates who are ready to deliver effective instruction when they enter the teaching profession.

Question 2A: Can you provide specific information on the impact that [current HEA data collection and reporting] requirements have had on your state?

The data collection and reporting currently required under the Higher Education Act are unduly burdensome and distract from our on-going work to improve the quality of teacher-preparation programs in Rhode Island. Because we are forced to expend so much state capacity responding to hundreds of data requirements that do not correlate with effective elementary and secondary instruction, our ability to collect and report useful data and to improve or close programs based upon these data is strained.

Question 2B: What specific information required by the statute and the reporting templates developed by the department is particularly helpful? Please provide examples of information you feel the federal government should continue to collect, who would benefit from knowing this information, and why it is important data.

Certain elements in the data-collection and reporting requirements of the Higher Education Act are valuable in supporting our state-based improvement efforts, including data regarding state-licensure tests

(cut scores and passage rates, by institution and program); the number of completers by organization and program; the number of programs; candidate demographic data; the median GPA and the median SAT, GRE, and ACT scores for program entry; and hours of clinical practice required for program completion.

These data elements inform our state systems of program approval and improvement and they provide valuable information to potential students considering these programs, to school districts that hire program graduates, to state and local policymakers who authorize and fund the preparation programs, to taxpayers, and to the institutions themselves, as they seek continued program approval.

Question 2C: What specific information required by the statute and on the reporting templates is not helpful? Why should we no longer collect it?

A significant majority of the approximately 440 data elements currently required by statute and by the reporting templates is not helpful. I believe that Congress should undertake a comprehensive review of current data elements and should eliminate most of them in order to promote a focus on high-quality, actionable data. The Higher Education Act data requirements focus on program inputs and provide us with too much insignificant information while overlooking data on program outcomes and the needs of students in elementary and secondary schools.

Below is a list of some of the data elements that Congress could consider striking.

Section I, Program Information:

- Strike alternative initial teacher-certification program with higher-education designation (under Section IB). Congress should maintain two reporting categories in this section: higher-education provider and alternative provider. The current categories perpetuate stigmas associated with both pathways and provide no actionable data for program improvement.
- Strike most of the current data elements on program admission and program exit because these data focus on inputs and are unrelated to the capacity of the program to produce effective teachers.
- Strike requirements related to personality tests, minimum number of courses required for entry, recommendations, personal essays, entrance interviews, fingerprinting, background checks (for teacher-preparation program admission), and minimum SAT, GRE, and ACT scores; however, retain the reporting requirement for *median* GPA and *median* SAT, ACT, and GRE scores, as these, unlike the minimum score required for admission, are key indicators of program selectivity.
- Strike the reporting requirement for the number of full-time and adjunct faculty, as these data provide little useful information about program quality.
- Strike the reporting requirement for the average number of hours required for mentoring or induction, as these data are an input with neither clear standards for nor correlation with program quality.

Section II, Reliability and Validity of Teacher Certification or Licensure Assessments and Requirements: Strike this section because it provides no information about the quality of the teacher-preparation program.

Section III, Teacher Certification or Licensure Requirements: Strike this section, as it is a duplicative and inefficient means of communicating program information to potential candidates. In Rhode Island, applicants can easily review these requirements on our website:

<http://www.ride.ri.gov/TeachersAdministrators/EducatorCertification/CertificationRequirements.aspx>.

Section IV, State Teacher Standards and Criteria for Certification and Licensure: Strike this section as duplicative of other federal reporting requirements (e.g., ESEA Flexibility applications) and as unrelated to program quality. In Rhode Island, the public can easily view this information on our website:

<https://www.ride.ri.gov/Portals/0/Uploads/Documents/Teachers-and-Administrators-Excellent-Educators/Educator-Certification/Cert-main-page/RIPTS-with-preamble.pdf>.

Section V, Pass Rates and Scaled Scores: Strike the “all enrolled students who have completed all nonclinical courses” group. We rarely have relevant data on this point, due to the structure and design of our preparation programs. Especially as organizations experiment with variations in program sequence (e.g., residency programs), this data point is unnecessary.

Section VI, Alternative Routes to Teacher Certification or Licensure: Strike this section as a separate section and integrate the aligned reporting requirements from this section into the general reporting on program quality.

Section VII, Criteria for Assessing the Performance of Teacher Preparation Programs in the State: Strike this section, as it is unduly burdensome yet sets no clear standards for review or for state-initiated program improvement. Additionally, narrative responses are subjective and do not allow for comparisons across states.

Section VIII, Low-Performing State Teacher Preparation Programs: Strike the narrative components of this section, as narratives are subjective and the lead to inconsistency across states.

Section IX, Shortages of Highly Qualified Teachers: Strike this section. Rhode Island, like most states, has moved toward evaluating teachers based on their effect on student achievement. The definition of highly qualified teachers, which is based solely on inputs, now has limited significance.

Section X, Use of Technology: Strike this section, as there is no clear correlation between the use of technology and effective instruction that improves student achievement.

I am pleased that under your leadership the Committee is conducting a thorough review of the federal interest in these data-collection and reporting requirements and that you may seek to eliminate those requirements that distract states and teacher-preparation programs from focusing on authentic measures of program quality. In the Higher Education Act reauthorization, I believe that Congress should empower us to focus on fewer yet more significant data elements that support the improvement of teacher-preparation programs.

Question 2D: In thinking of the reauthorization of Title II of HEA, please provide specific examples of other information not currently required by statute or on the templates that would be beneficial to collect, who would benefit from knowing this information, and why it is important data.

I believe that Congress should require that states collect data on a limited set of indicators, that all states should collect this data in a consistent manner, that the data we collect should be data that help us take actions to improve preparation programs, and that federal funds should be available to aid both the state and the preparation programs in the collection and analysis of program data.

In Rhode Island, we collect program enrollment and completion data and teacher-assignment data linked to program completion. We then analyze the data to attain significant indicators of program effectiveness, including:

- program retention and persistence rates;
- the average amount of time for program completion;
- employment rates for completers, including the proportion of program completers employed in high-need subjects;
- the percentages of completers placed in high-need schools;
- employment-retention rates;
- the aggregate teacher-evaluation data of program completers; and
- data regarding candidates' performance-assessment results, if applicable.

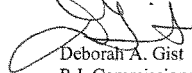
At the state level, we collect and report data on the number of programs that we review and the proportion of programs that we approve under the state program-approval processes.

Each of these data elements provides valuable information to potential entrants into a program, to state and federal policymakers, to institutions, and to the school systems employing program completers. These are, therefore, examples of the kinds of data and information that the Higher Education Act should encourage states to collect and analyze.

In conclusion, it seems to me that we are at a moment of time in our country at which we have a great opportunity to strengthen the teaching profession because change is under way in many states and because there is a growing desire to transform education. As Congress moves forward with these initiatives, it will be increasingly important to ensure that accountability systems are in place for teacher-preparation programs and that support systems are in place for program completers who are new to the teaching profession. In reauthorizing the Higher Education Act, Congress might consider a system in which preparation programs receive commendations if they maintain programs of support for their graduates or program completers throughout their first year, at least, in the classroom. Preparation programs should be encouraged to take on this responsibility so that potential candidates know that they will have this support and so that completers and graduates will not have to rely on the possibility that their initial school district will provide this service during the first year of teaching. The preparation programs themselves need not provide the services of an induction program – programs and colleges could contract with a private, nonprofit service provider to do so.

Please notify me if you require additional information. I am honored that you and your colleagues have sought out my observations and feedback, which I hope will prove helpful to you as you continue with the your commitment to strengthening the teaching profession.

Sincerely,



Deborah A. Gist

R.I. Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education



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April 15, 2014

The Honorable Todd Rokita
 Chairman
 Subcommittee on Early Childhood,
 Elementary, and Secondary
 Education
 Committee on Education and the
 Workforce
 2181 Rayburn House Office Building
 Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Virginia Foxx
 Chairwoman
 Subcommittee on Early Childhood,
 Elementary, and Secondary
 Education
 Committee on Education and the
 Workforce
 2101 Rayburn House Office Building
 Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Rokita and Chairwoman Foxx:

It was an honor to speak before the Committee on Education and the Workforce on "Exploring Efforts to Strengthen the Teaching Profession" in February. Please find responses to your questions submitted for the record along with some additional thoughts about how federal reporting requirements could promote greater accountability and better outcomes among teacher preparation institutions.

At Urban Teacher Center, we guarantee the effectiveness of every teacher we recommend for certification. Not every teacher candidate we recruit meets our standard; approximately 23% of participants leave our program during the residency year. In the end, we expect about 90% who successfully pass our residency year to meet our bar for certification. Every teacher who earns this distinction has demonstrated their effectiveness in the classroom through multiple performance measures. We assume the responsibility for making that determination—and the cost of program attrition that goes with it—because we believe schools should not have to play a guessing game about the quality of each new hire.

We would like to see all teacher preparers held similarly accountable. Some states and individual providers are making headway with their own accountability systems, but self-policing will never be sufficient. In 2010, only 37 teacher preparation programs were designated low-performing out of thousands operating nationally. Some states did not identify a single program as low performing. In contrast, almost 44,000 K-12 schools were deemed underperforming in 2011. We believe it is unfair to place all of the accountability burden on K-12 schools when they have no way of assessing the quality of their most important resource—the new teachers they hire.

The federal government can tackle this disconnect and encourage broad-scale accountability among teacher preparation institutions by using Title II to measure what matters: the impact of recently prepared teachers in classrooms.

Current Title II Reporting Template

Currently, teacher preparation programs must report on too many irrelevant indicators, many with little bearing on how teachers ultimately fare in the classroom. The result is a reporting process that is tedious, burdensome to program staff, and a distraction from more important outcomes.

In addition, many responses must be given in narrative form. This requires much more time and effort than indicating yes or no on pre-determined important indicators. Narrative data cannot be easily aggregated or used to compare trends across institutions and across states in the same way that quantitative data can. Ultimately it is this type of quantifiable and comparable data that is most useful in comparing programs and assessing and comparing the effectiveness of programs.

Specifically, information that is currently collected, but we believe is not useful – precisely because it is collected mostly via narrative text – includes the following sections: Section II Annual Goals, Section V Technology and Section VI Teacher Training. The data in these sections is narrative and is reported by programs to states but is not then included within the state report, thus making it invisible to the public. It is unclear what states are

doing with this data or what purpose it serves as it's not made available to the public.

The current Title II reporting template does collect some useful information for the public, local districts, states, and interested applicants to reference when comparing programs. This data includes a more limited set of the program admission requirements; program enrollment numbers, broken out by race/ethnicity status; numbers of teachers prepared by certification and subject area; numbers of program completers; and assessment pass rates. It is important to note that this is useful data for program comparisons but not for comparing the quality and effectiveness of programs. The characteristics of a program do not necessarily speak to the quality of a program, and as such, a look at only characteristics (inputs, diversity, enrollment) will not give a complete view of the quality of the program.

Recommended Changes

While programs must report on hundreds of fields, they are not asked to report on the quality of the program, such as how they ensure they have trained and graduated effective teachers. Further, no data is collected or reported on how program graduates fare after certification has been granted. We think this is a serious oversight and would like to propose two different sets of data metrics that would hold teacher preparation programs accountable for the teachers they train and graduate while also providing useful information that would help to compare the quality and effectiveness of teacher preparation programs.

First, we would like to see all programs required to develop measures to assess teacher candidates' effectiveness and to then report out on these measures. The approach we take at UTC is to withhold certification recommendation as a preparer until we have proof of effectiveness. We only graduate and recommend certification for successful participants after three years in the program—one year as classroom residents (or “residents”), and two as full-time teachers of record (or “fellows”). By the end of year three, we have two years of student gains data, along with multiple classroom observations and survey data on which to base our decision of whether to recommend a candidate for certification. UTC strongly believes that all programs should include observations of teacher practice and measures of student learning as part of their effectiveness evaluation.

Second, we would like to see states report on the following measures for all of their teacher preparation programs:

- teacher retention rates 1-3 years after graduation
- classroom performance (via district observation data and/or principal evaluations)
- student outcomes (state assessment gains)
- performance on district multi-measure evaluation systems, if applicable

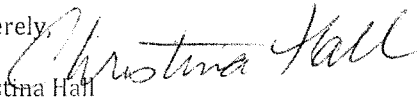
We recognize that it may be challenging for states to report on these measures as much of this data is held and owned by the districts that have hired program graduates. Further complicating reporting is the fact that not all program graduates find teaching jobs within the same state they trained. States will need to ensure that districts are accurately collecting pipeline data on all of their new teachers. Programs will need the opportunity to vet this data to ensure accuracy of pipeline assignment, much in the same way they do currently with the assessment pass rate data that is already collected and reported by the state. This will require more integrated data systems and better communication between teacher preparation institutions, the local education agencies that hire their graduates, and state education agencies.

There may be multiple ways to achieve the same performance reporting result, whether it be requiring programs to report on how they measure effectiveness of their teacher candidates or requiring states to report on actual effectiveness of program completers. This information is essential for districts so they can make smart hiring decisions; for teachers – far too many of whom are placed in schools totally unprepared to effectively teach all of their students; and most importantly, for students who for far too long have been disserved by an educational system that does not value quality teacher preparation.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide additional information on teacher preparation reporting requirements. I would also point out that we largely agree with the points made by the Education Trust in its 2103 report, “Preparing and Advancing Teachers and School Leaders: A New Approach for Federal Policy.” We hope these recommendations clarify our concerns and

would encourage the Committee on Education and the Workforce to consider how our recommendations for Title II reporting requirements could help to support greater accountability among teacher preparation institutions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Christina Hall". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Christina Hall
Co-Founder & Co-Director
Urban Teacher Center



**Massachusetts Department of
Elementary and Secondary Education**

75 Pleasant Street, Malden, Massachusetts 02148-4906

Telephone: (781) 338-3000
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Mitchell D. Chester, Ed.D.
Commissioner

June 9, 2014

Todd Rokita, Chairman
Subcommittee on Early Childhood,
Elementary and Secondary Education
U.S. House of Representatives
2181 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, MA 20515-6100

Dear Chairman Rokita,

I am in response to your questions for the record from the February 2014 hearing on teacher preparation.

(1) What info required by statute and on the reporting templates is helpful? What items should we continue to collect and why is that important, who benefits from knowing this?

- Data that is consistent and serves as comparative points across organizations. These data points are useful to organizations, the state and we would assume, national groups with a vested interest in preparation:
 - Licensure tests (see additional data points in question 3 below)
 - Cut Scores
 - Pass Rates
 - Overall and by program for each test
 - Number of Completers by organization and programs – disaggregating by Undergraduate and Post-graduate
 - Number of programs
 - Candidate Demographic data
 - Clock hours required for clinical practice
- Section VII. Low-Performing (see additional data points in question 3 below)

(2) What do we ask you to collect that is not helpful, and why?

- Alternative with Higher Ed designation is not defined and therefore serves limited purpose. Designating programs as “alternative” versus “traditional” sets up and perpetuates stigmas associated with both pathways.
 - Suggest removing and maintaining only two categories – IHE Provider and Alternative Provider.
- Capturing all of the data elements for admission (entry) and program exit is unnecessary and overemphasizes inputs. (Section 1.B and 1.C) Suggestion: no longer collect data point on transcripts, fingerprinting, background check, minimum number of courses, recommendations, personal essay, interviews, and minimum SAT/GRE/ACT scores.
 - Instead, collect only median GPA, median SAT/ACT/GRE
- Section II Assurances. Do away with this whole section. Provides only an organization’s opinions about whether they are doing certain things or not. With more robust data (i.e. employment rates in districts) you should be able to TELL whether they are doing these things or not rather than taking their word for it.
- Section III Initial Teacher Credential Requirements. Unclear what the purpose of this section is beyond providing state level information to potential candidates. It would be more beneficial to point candidates to our state website for all of the requirements.
- Section V. Pass Rates Group “All enrolled students who have completed all nonclinical courses” – this group is not functional and rarely do we have data due to the structure and design of programs. Especially as organizations experiment with variations in terms of program sequence (i.e. residency programs) this data point is unnecessary.
- There are reporting requirements that are not particularly useful to the state and are burdensome in terms collecting and updating. MA would recommend that if there are not specific and strategic national research or policy interests aligned these questions that they be removed:
 - Section IV: State teacher standards and criteria for licensure. Again, available via state regulation and our website. Particularly, Title II should consider questions like IV.10 (“do state standards contain coherent and rigorous content?”) that asks a question that cannot be supported by facts/data but relies on the state’s own opinion of their standards.
 - Section VI: Alternative routes to teacher certification
 - Section VII: Criteria for assessing the performance of teacher prep programs in the state. Alternatively, it would be preferred if Title II provides a set of criteria and requests answers in the form of forced choices (yes/no/partially) such that data can be captured in a chart. Providing narratives makes comparisons across states challenging. States should be allowed to reference regulations or links to websites for additional information
- Additional data points that provide little to no insight or meaningful data regarding program operation or effectiveness:
 - Number of Full-time and adjunct faculty provides little insight into program operation (Section 1.E)
 - Average Number of clock hours required for mentoring/induction (Section I.E)
 - Shortages of highly qualified teachers (Section IX). Definition has limited meaning and weight. We’ve shifted our focus on programs meeting the needs of districts as a component of our review system and find that to be a more impactful target in aligning prep with the needs of K-12
 - Section X. Use of Technology

(3) What don't we collect that we should? Why would it be important?

- Title II should extend its reporting to all program completers prepared within an organization, including candidates for Leadership licenses, Other School Personnel (Guidance, Psychologists, School Nurse), and second-stage licensure programs
- Licensure Assessment Data
 - Average number of attempts prior to passing
 - % Passing on first attempt (essentially a retake analysis)
- Section VIII - Low Performing Criteria: Provide options for criteria states might use for setting definition of low performing programs such that a comparative table could be used to quickly view different states' approaches.
 - Title II should also collect same information for High-Performing programs.
- Additional data points that should be collected are:
 - Employment rates, including % employed in high-need subjects and % high-need/low-performing schools
 - Employment Retention rates
 - Program retention/persistence rates
 - Average amount of time for program completion
 - Evaluation data (data on how program completers who become teachers do on the district/state evaluation system -- e.g., aggregate ratings data)
 - Performance Assessment data
 - At the state level - # of programs reviewed versus # of programs approved/not approved

Other Suggestions:

- Format and functionality in which state and organization data is publicly reported is limited. Suggest adding a search or sort functionality so that you could view only the data you wanted to see. Right now you have to scroll through a webpage filled with very long tables. Also consider an export function so that data can be sorted and analyzed in different ways.

If you need additional information, please contact me at hpeske@doe.mass.edu or (781) 338-3560.

Sincerely,



Heather Peske
Associate Commissioner for Educator Quality

April 14, 2014

The Honorable Todd Rokita, Chairman
Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Education
Committee on Education and the Workforce
2181 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Virginia Foxx, Chairwoman
Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Training
Committee on Education and the Workforce
2181 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Rokita and Chairwoman Foxx,

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify at the February 27 hearing on “Exploring Efforts to Strengthen the Teaching Profession.” It was a privilege to share my thoughts and experiences as the associate chair for teacher education at Vanderbilt’s Peabody College of education and human development. In response to the additional questions posed, I am pleased to offer my responses below. As I noted in my testimony before the Subcommittees, the views expressed are my own and not necessarily representative of Vanderbilt University.

What specific impact have reporting requirements had on your program?

Currently, reporting requirements cost staff time but lead to little positive impact. For the reporting to have a positive impact, data would need to be aggregated across institutions and states in ways that enable us to compare our data with those of other institutions in the state or region, and especially with peer institutions across the country.

What specific information required by statute and on the reporting templates developed by the department is particularly helpful? Provide examples of information you feel the federal government should continue to collect, who would benefit from knowing this information, and why it is important data.

While data reporting requirements are necessary to ensure that taxpayer funds are being used appropriately, we want to move toward smarter regulations that complement (rather than duplicate) reporting requirements for the States and the profession, and that can help inform the field. As noted in my earlier testimony, when we invest time in collecting data, it should be the sort of data that will help us ask and answer questions that will improve our work locally, and move the field more broadly. Specifically, we need to know: *who is entering teacher preparation, what kinds of programs prepare them to be successful, and in what kinds of contexts?* These are questions of recruitment, relevance, and impact. Current Title II elements that can begin to help us unpack the question of who is attending and succeeding in what kinds of programs include:

- basic demographic data about graduates by institution *and field*;
- pass rate data from credentialing exams;
- comparable information for alternate routes (recognizing that the definition of “alternate route” should be further studied as states define them differently and one state’s “alternate route” may be another state’s “traditional program”); and
- entry requirements along with actual data on program entrants’ performance in relation to these requirements (e.g., GPA, test scores, etc.).

(Note that to be usable, these data should be comparable across states.)

What specific information required by the statute and on the reporting templates is *not helpful*? Why should we no longer collect it?

While data should advance the field, the federal government does not have the capacity to collect and represent all the data points that programs use for program improvement, nor that state policymakers use for state policy decisions. There are two kinds of data that should not be collected by the federal government: data for which we lack mechanisms to make comparisons across states, and data that are more usefully gathered and examined in the context of state and professional program review. The following items on the current template fall into one or both of these categories:

→ **SECTION II Goals:** Programs are asked to set annual quantifiable goals for increasing the number of prospective teachers trained in teacher shortage areas designated by the Secretary or by the state educational agency, including mathematics, science, special education, and instruction of limited English proficient students. Programs are asked if the goal was met (yes/no), to provide a description of strategies used to achieve goal, and to provide a description of steps to improve performance in meeting goal or lessons learned in meeting goal, if applicable.

While recruitment and preparation for shortage areas is a key concern, the data are not collected in a form that might be analyzed and aggregated.

→ **SECTION II Assurances:** Programs are asked to check a box indicating whether or not the institution is in compliance with the following assurances:

- preparation responds to the identified needs of the local educational agencies or States where the program completers are likely to teach, based on past hiring and recruitment trends;
- preparation is closely linked with the needs of schools and the instructional decisions new teachers face in the classroom;
- prospective special education teachers are prepared in core academic subjects and to instruct in core academic subjects;
- prospective general education teachers are prepared to provide instruction to students with disabilities;
- prospective general education teachers are prepared to provide instruction to limited English proficient students;
- prospective general education teachers are prepared to provide instruction to students from low-income families; and
- prospective teachers are prepared to effectively teach in urban and rural schools, as applicable.

Institutions are provided with a text box inviting them to describe their institution’s most successful strategies in meeting the assurances listed above.

→ **SECTION V: Use of Technology.** Programs are asked (yes/no) whether they:

- prepare teachers to integrate technology effectively into curricula and instruction;
- use technology effectively to collect data to improve teaching and learning;
- use technology effectively to manage data to improve teaching and learning; and
- use technology effectively to analyze data to improve teaching and learning.

Programs are then asked to provide a description of the evidence used to show that the program prepares teachers to integrate technology effectively into curricula and instruction, and to use technology effectively to collect, manage, and analyze data in order to improve teaching and learning for the purpose of increasing student academic achievement. Programs also are asked to include a description of the evidence used to show they prepare teachers to use the principles of universal design for learning. Finally programs are asked to note planning activities with a timeline if any of the four elements listed above are not currently in place.

→ **SECTION VI: Teacher Training.** Programs are asked (yes/no) whether their program *prepares general education teachers* to teach students with disabilities effectively, to participate as a member of individualized education program teams, and to teach students who are limited English proficient effectively. Programs also are asked (yes/no) whether their program *prepares special education teachers* to teach students with disabilities effectively, to participate as a member of individualized education program teams, and to teach students who are limited English proficient effectively. Programs are asked to provide a description of the evidence programs use to demonstrate their answers to these questions.

In each of these cases, programmatic responses and evidence would be most reliably and productively examined in the context of state program approval and professional accreditation. Note that while asked on the Institutional Report Cards these items are not aggregated in the State Report Cards. This may indicate either that the data collected are not very useful or informative, or that the data are of a grain size better examined in the context of accreditation review.

What specific examples of other information not currently required by statute or on the templates would be beneficial to collect? Who would benefit from knowing this information and why is it important?

Ultimately, teacher retention and student impact data – considered in relation to contextual data and graduate characteristics – will allow us to dig into questions of what kinds of questions seem to prepare teachers for what contexts. However, state capacity to link learning outcomes with teachers, and teachers with preparation programs varies greatly. As state data systems come online, useful data will include:

- evidence of student learning
- job placement of program completers within 12 months of graduation
- retention of program completers in teaching after three years
- results of teacher evaluation

Reporting and accountability demands must be applied consistently across preparation pathways and models. If reporting and evidence requirements are intended to make the system better, it only makes sense for those regulations to apply in equal measure to all preparation organizations. Specifically,

states should be required to report data for *all* teacher preparation providers (university, non-profit, school districts, etc.) in order to track the performance in each route.

Congress should strengthen the current requirement that States identify and report low-performing programs. States should be responsible for developing criteria for determining program performance levels, in consultation with stakeholders, and the criteria must be submitted for public comment.

Thank you again for the opportunity to participate in this hearing and to share my views. I appreciate the careful consideration the Subcommittee is giving to the role of the federal government in supporting the improvement of teacher preparation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Marcy Singer-Gabella". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Marcy" being the most prominent.

Marcy Singer-Gabella, Ph.D.
Associate Chair for Teacher Education &
Professor of the Practice of Education

[Whereupon, at 11:55 a.m., the subcommittees were adjourned.]

